~~In J. L.~~ R. W. Tomkin

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THE DIVINE SOCIETY

THE DIVINE SOCIETY:

Christian Dogma and Social Redemption

BY

W. G. PECK

AUTHOR OF "THE VALUES OF THE SACRAMENT," ETC.

Excessere omnes, adytis arisque relictis,
Di, quibus imperium hoc steterat; succurritis urbi
Incensae . . .

Æneid, Bk. II

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To

The Reverend W. WHITEHEAD

STAUNCH FRIEND AND FELLOW-SERVANT

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK

FOR MANY REASONS

PREFACE

The thesis of this book may be stated in a sentence or two. The exhaustion of the modern world is sufficient proof that there is no hope of any honourable social order apart from the acceptance of definite belief about the spiritual purpose of life. The attempt to divorce the political and economic construction from the guiding principles of religion, or even to control religion by secular sanctions, has resulted in widespread confusion. To some clear view of the meaning of the soul and society this age must return, or the shadows which now beset us will deepen toward a more tragic night than history can tell. This book attempts to show that the Christian Faith is the supreme answer to the profoundest problems of human association: that its implication is a society widely differentiated from the modern order, and that this implication resides in the very nature of its central dogmas. The argument here pursued has been developed from time to time with three friends, not all personally known to each other, but each possessing wider knowledge and certainly greater ability than I can claim—the Rev. Dr Orchard, of King's Weigh House Church; the Rev. H. R. Barry, a minister of the United Methodist Church; and the Rev. W. White-

head, a priest in the English Church. Although none of these may give unqualified assent to everything contained in this book, they have all, perhaps unknowingly, helped me to shape the course of its development, and I gladly acknowledge a great debt to them.

I must add that some parts of the sixth and eighth chapters have been contributed to *The Congregational Quarterly*, and I am indebted to the editor, Dr A. Peel, for permission to print them here.

W. G. P.

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THE DIVINE SOCIETY

I

THE MODERN CONFUSION

This generation is equally remarkable for its preoccupation with social problems and for its hesitancy and confusion concerning the problem of society. It has produced a complex apparatus for the study of acknowledged evils in our civilization, it has supplied itself with libraries of sociological statistics; but its empirical therapeutic gropes in darkness because there is no fundamental agreement as to the meaning and end of human society as the supreme phenomenon of the visible universe. It is true that recent years have witnessed the emergence of interesting speculations, based upon discovered principles of biology and psychology, and applied to the social evolution and behaviour of mankind; but it is certain that no powerful spiritual conviction, no profound social ethic, no moving ideal, can be supplied from those quarters. They cannot enunciate an architectonic of society, because they lack the teleological vision. They cannot set the pilgrim tribe of man upon its right road, because they do not know whether there be any goal. They can set forth phenomena in suggestive relations, but

not in relation to Ultimate Reality, which is the only relation that can determine their deepest meaning.

We observe the movement and reaction of political theory in these days, hardly with the hope of any great clarification, but rather with the fear that confusion will grow worse confounded. Individualism is not dead, but its conceptions grow blurred and vague. Socialism, the last of the great doctrinaire systems, has already exhibited exhaustion in the attempt at definition; and whereas it started by assuming the authority of the secular State, or by invoking the authority of an international super-State yet to appear, it is now embarrassed by a socialist criticism of the State which, emphasizing the importance of the group, can sometimes propose to dispense with the State altogether. Conservatism, once the stronghold of a certain corporate sense which was scandalized by the individualism and *laissez-faire* of Manchester Liberalism, has now become the champion of such obfuscated individualism as remains. Liberalism itself, once suspicious of the State, and the friend of the Man, is now in tremulous hesitation before divergent paths. Our parliamentary parties have abandoned all pretence of political philosophy. At their best, they are directed by a certain homespun enthusiasm for some more or less valuable and relevant expedient. At their worst, they are employed in the arts of spell-binding.

This situation of political thought is the result perhaps chiefly of two causes. In the first place, it is the effect of the general agnosticism and philosophical confusion. Unless this visible universe, and man's life within it, are self-contained and self-

explanatory facts, needing no elucidation beyond that which a little straightforward attention will supply, it seems clear that the essential nature of man and his social institutions cannot be understood apart from some theory of the nature of invisible Reality. It would seem, indeed, that unless we may claim to know something of the unseen, we can know nothing of the seen. We can form no satisfying judgment as to the proper shape, or even as to the fundamental worth, of human life. The loftiest altruism and the meanest selfishness has each its apologia, and the final defence of the one and condemnation of the other must inevitably carry us into some sort of dogma. Therefore it is axiomatic that while opposing philosophies will assuredly cause controversy and division, the neglect of basic philosophy will produce only unintelligible chaos, and will degrade controversy to the level of a brawl.

It seems that our practical politics is in some danger of such degradation ; and the reason is that we have consented to discuss politics without first arriving at a view of the universe. We have chosen our party without first choosing the only thing that can sanctify a party, namely, a religious doctrine. Socrates was condemned by the Athenian democracy because in his teaching he was said to have neglected the gods. We think it cause for self-congratulation that we neglect the gods. Our politicians strive with earnest purpose to "keep religion out of politics." Possibly they are wise in their own interest, for it may be that when religion once more enters politics it will make an end of all the politics we know.

A hasty observer might be inclined to fasten upon Auguste Comte as the source and begetter of our muddled secularism. And it is true that although Comte had some notion of a "spiritual power" within the State, he desiderated the rejection of all metaphysical principles, and his spiritual class was to be "a combination of *savants* orthodox in science." But the practical influence of Comte in this country has been almost negligible, whatever it may have been elsewhere; and we can only conclude that we have been caught in the sweep of forces of which Comte himself was only a particular evidence: forces generated within the modern period of history and now, we may piously trust, working themselves out to their ultimate exhaustion in the chaotic bewilderment of the modern world.

The situation has, however, a secondary cause. Mazzini declared that all economic questions were becoming political questions and all political questions were becoming religious questions. Had he asserted that all economic problems could be solved, in the last resort, only by a religious reference, he would have been nearer the truth; for recent years have seemed to show the process, as he stated it, actually reversed. The economic question has swallowed all others; and all political and moral discourse is dragged into the wrangle about material possessions. The immediate origin of this portentous episode in our political history is undoubtedly to be found in the false theorizing of the eighteenth century, which so shaped the future that the very priests of light were doomed to walk in darkness and the acknowledged parties of progress were but

dimly aware of the actual realities of the national life. Thus the advent of Labour, grim and huge, though connected in various ways with doctrinaire Socialism, has certainly helped, in one sense, to depress political philosophy. Its leaders may possess theory and vision, but they cannot, in the nature of things, prevent the rise of a sharp and severe struggle between those who have, and those who have not: a strife proceeding far more from awakened instinct than from a coherent philosophy upon either side.

Whatever the issue of that struggle, the basic problem of human society will remain, to be solved only by reference to a general view of human life and destiny. The truth of this contention was involved in Aristotle's description of the State as existing through the necessities of moral life. There can be no adequate political philosophy without an ethical theory. There can be no adequate political philosophy which does not treat the State as a moral society called into being by the fundamental needs of man's spiritual nature. Either politics is a necessary expression of spiritual life, or it is an employment of entirely problematic value. This is the prime assertion which needs emphasis in the modern world, to countervail the quantitative judgments of a *real-politik* born of spiritual blindness. It is not enough, however, to observe the lamentable effects of secularism in every sphere, and to protest against its works. In order to destroy it we must satisfy ourselves as to the answers to certain deep-lying interrogations. What is the significance of human life as social? Is society merely a field of exercise for individual virtue, the actually existing

of many conceivable alternative modes of educating the soul? Are social institutions no more than epiphenomena of transient significance? Or is there an inner, indefeasible necessity for the soul to find itself in society—a necessity whereof the roots reach beneath the visible world? Is this a universe in which the individual in himself alone is an incomplete term?

This was the issue between Hegel and the ethical theory of Kant. For Kant, there was nothing ultimately good but the good will. He regarded freedom as the right to will the performance of a duty autonomously imposed. The secret places of judgment were hidden in each man's solitary heart; and the Kantian ethic becomes related to social culture only in the doctrine of duty as something universal—we are to act in such wise that our motives may be stated as universal principles of unvarying cogency. This seems to involve a moral society as the assumed environment of the individual's ethical life; but, after all, the moral end appears in the Kantian view to be, not the rich complexity of an ideal social relation expressing itself in an authoritative culture and tradition, but the good will whereof the only admissible motive is reverence for the moral law. And it would appear that this does not actually carry us beyond an atomistic view of the individual in society.

Hegel so regarded Kant's ethical theory. He held that freedom must be expressed not merely subjectively, but outwardly also, in the structure of an embodied society. Duty must not make of each man an end in himself, but must pass into the

realization of a corporate loyalty and a social ethic wherein the external institution shall express the fulness of the implications of inward morality. This may seem an unpractical and academic controversy, but until our political thinkers have made up their minds upon it, the struggle between individualism and collectivism will continue to be conducted in a fog, for no one will have any certainty as to whether, and in what sense, we are living in a collectivist or an individualist universe.

Again, we have to face and answer the questions, What precisely is the unifying principle in human association ? And what composes valid authority ? Are cohesion and the authority which secures it of transcendental, or of purely natural and contingent, origin ? Is the principle of social loyalty, is the authority which is based thereon, rightly conceived as springing from the personality of every member of the community ; or are both cohesion and authority properly imposed by some kind of force, exerted by an individual or by a minority, upon a multitude who supply no sanctions ? Democracy is taken for granted in modern England ; but neither Plato nor Aristotle nor Hegel, mighty exponents of the implicit sociality of man, as a spiritual being, considered that democracy in our sense was a necessary deduction from their postulates. But it is certain that until we have discovered our own adequate answer to the questions which they so deeply penetrated, we shall not be able to assure ourselves that our social foundations are not quicksand.

We have to repeat here that the " open sesame " of the modern mind, the word " evolution," is of

no final power or value in this task. It is futile to imagine that any relevant reply to questions so formulated can be gained merely from an account of the actual course of social development. No biological history, no descriptive psychology, can really indicate the intrinsic significance and worth of human society, even though they avoid the pitfall of "attempting to turn priority in time into causal relation," and forbear to look for the whole meaning of the modern State in the psychology of the herd or the customs of the primitive tribe. For if evolution be no more than the behaviour of a physical universe beyond which we may not look, then we cannot hope to derive from the study of its past course any certain guidance for the future, because the origins of the evolutionary process are infra-rational, and the end may be nothing that our minds can even touch. But if evolution be the method of a creation which is spiritual, then we shall seek the meaning of the process not so much in the process itself as in what we conceive to be its origin. That is to say, we shall find our ultimate social sanctions, not in the conclusions of any particular science concerning the course of past development, but in our conception of the purpose of the universe. We shall seek, in the last resort, not a biology or a psychology, but a philosophy and a religion. We shall require, not an account of evolution, but an account of God. We shall look for a creed and a gospel.

The supreme danger of the modern world is that its politics, as indeed its general culture, is dissociated from convictions concerning ultimate ques-

tions. In the past, political theory has involved a doctrine of God and the universe. Plato and St Augustine and St Thomas Aquinas conceived that there must be a palpable connection between one's view of any proposed polity and one's view of God. It was left for our modern period, and particularly the nineteenth century, to attempt to correct a conception which appeared to be both an illusion and bad form. Thus from many pulpits was it urged that although politics should be kept out of religion, yet religion should be put into politics. The practical result was precisely the same as that of the politicians' endeavour to keep religion out of politics; for no church in this country dared to suggest what particular shape politics would assume when it had been inoculated with religion. Apparently Christianity might mean both Free Trade and Protection, Imperialism and Pacificism, Capitalism and Socialism. It is true that here and there an Anglican vicar prayed publicly for the success of a Tory candidate; but this did not imply that he really believed the Tory candidate to be the logical deduction from the Nicene Creed, supported by God and all His angels. He merely knew that he was supported by the squire and all the local gentry.

The particular alignment of churches in alliance with one or other of the great political parties was rooted in national history rather than in theology. No Anglican theologian was asked to demonstrate that Anglican theology necessarily involved Protection and Chinese labour in South Africa. No Nonconformist divine was expected to prove the

relation between evangelical doctrine and a Liberal budget. Plato and Aquinas would have sought the demonstration of such connections; but they had suffered the misfortune of living in less enlightened epochs. They might even have committed the unpardonable *faux pas* of asking a political candidate some highly personal questions about religion.

The divorce of modern politics from fundamental faith and reason, from fundamental doctrines of God and man, probably became finally accepted as a normal habit toward the end of the eighteenth century, though it had been instigated much earlier. The causes which produced this divorce will be discussed at a later stage of our argument. In the nineteenth century a notable succession of literary prophets — Carlyle, Ruskin, Dickens, Matthew Arnold and others—denounced its effects in England, without quite understanding all that was implied in their protest. But no fear struck the heart of the modern world until Socialism became a force to be reckoned with. Unfortunately, certain continental schools of Socialist thought had attempted, with almost incredible imbecility, to base themselves upon a rigid secularism. The Socialist Congress at Erfurt in 1891 declared that religious belief was a private affair. But Professor Ferri, of the University of Rome, published his book, *Socialismo e Scienza Positiva* in 1894,[1] calmly announcing that Socialism would in the future take the place of religion. The Congress of Erfurt committed an absurdity in benignly agreeing to treat religion as a private affair, for religion will either dictate to the

[1] English translation, published by the I.L.P., 1905.

whole of life or it will disappear. But Professor Ferri committed a crowning and surpassing absurdity. For how will Socialism, a theory of economic arrangement, show that the life of man is intrinsically of greater value than the life of beetles, or that the Socialist State is more worthy of preservation than an ant-hill ?

The secularist and anti-religious bias of some nineteenth century Socialists, however, was sufficient to convince many well-meaning people that capitalist economics was eminently Christian. Since Socialism was allied with atheism, Capitalism must be the economic flag of the Faith. The intellectual sponsors of the industrial revolution were quiet in their graves, and there was none to inquire concerning their particular shade of religious belief. The topsy-turvy process of the modern centuries was complete, and the religion of the pity and passion of God was accepted as the chief bulwark of a system which contradicted it in every vital point. Labouring in so heavy a morass of nonsense, the professedly Christian forces of this country suddenly found themselves negligible. For Capitalism had not originally been related in any intelligible scheme with Christian doctrine, and did not, in its grosser developments, pretend to need its sanctions. Socialism, upon the other hand, was said to be openly flouting them. At all events, the capitalist and the proletarian both stayed away from church. This perhaps is still the situation of Christianity in England, though it is certainly bound to be changed. The presence of Nonconformist local preachers in the counsels of the Labour Party, and the shifting

orientation of Anglican political thought, must be effective. But greater movements must be born before the whole modern tendency can be reversed.

We have argued that political theory needs as its background a philosophy of life, and for its practical energization a religion. Conversely, any religion capable of philosophical construction and moral interpretation, must bear political implications. This is certainly true of the Christian religion, as we shall endeavour to show; but it is necessary at the outset to observe that the religious sanction of society may easily be falsely invoked. It may, of course, be glibly summoned to the support of any proposed revolution; and the moral connection between the religion and the revolution can be debated. But a more subtle danger is that if it be asserted that the human social relation is of spiritual necessity and rooted in the Divine Nature, then the *de facto* existence of a particular social order may claim the ægis of religion. The argument may be that since, at this particular time and place, such and such a social order exists, it must be regarded as sacrosanct. This is the assumption generally underlying some kinds of Conservatism; and, indeed, such an assumption has been employed to sanction the most abject and servile obedience to the Chauvinism, the militarism, or the commercialism of various States. Loyalty, the principle of social cohesion in operation, has been praised as a divine virtue and required to countenance the vilest crimes. The worst patriotic scoundrels are the religious ones. The militarism of French Catholicism, the Kaiser-worship of German Lutherans, and the English

acceptance of the Union Jack as a religious symbol, are well-known phenomena.

The real nature of the fallacy here involved is exhibited by an examination of Hegel's philosophy of society. We have seen how he rightly regards the Kantian ethic as negative and individualistic. Hegel requires the State to sustain personality, and to "carry back the individual—whose tendency is to become a centre of his own—into the life of the universal substance." This function of the State leads Hegel to a doctrine of the divinity of the nation; and he assumes that the State, since it is the highest expression of social morality, may pass beyond moral restrictions. That is to say, the State has, by its own spiritual nature, dictatorial right; and Hegel illustrates this by the behaviour of the State to its citizens in time of war. But he apparently sees no possibility of the State imperfectly performing, or even perverting, its ideal function. He sees no possibility of the sinful State. How the State may bring back the individual from his self-centred isolation "into the life of the universal substance," and yet set him to the task of slaughtering the citizens of other States who, presumably, have been similarly brought by their own States into the life of the universal substance, remains a mystery. The guarantee of the consubstantiality of Germans and British, Russians and French, must obviously be something other than their particular States. Hegel, who propounded a spiritual conception of society, seems to fall far short of realizing his own implications.

What he omits to consider is that the actually

existing State is not to be identified with the ideal expression of a cosmic principle, unless it can be asserted that man's life is rationally and morally unimpaired. If such an assertion be made, it may perhaps follow that the whole meaning of the social relation, in its entire depth and complexity, may be discovered merely by observing the existing State. But, indeed, the conditions of the problem are vastly more embarrassed than the Hegelian philosophy can allow. The Hegelian school may have been founded upon the Greek ethico-social philosophy, but certain principles of the Greek development are not given due place in their scheme ; for, as a matter of fact, the essential elements of the main problem display themselves in the course of Greek thought, wherein the intractable questions were faced and, though remaining unsolved, became the occasion of some of the noblest efforts of the human mind. Indeed, there can be no better illustration of what is meant by the problem of society than is found in the reaction of Greek thought upon the political situation in the critical period of Athenian history.

It will be our task in the next chapter to elucidate, if we can, this fundamental problem of human association, and to show how Plato rose to the perception of the intellectual and spiritual issues involved. But we shall be compelled to conclude that the Greek philosophers found no adequate answer to the chief questions, and we shall then pass to the assertion that these questions were finally and satisfactorily answered only in the Christian revelation, holding that as the questions are both theoretical and practical, the answer also is theoretical and

practical. We shall see how Christian thinkers set out to conceive a society founded upon a basis, invisible, but not unknown, since it had been set forth in the Incarnation of the Son of God, His Life, Teaching and Death, and was already essentially realized in the spiritual fellowship of the Church. Thereafter, we shall observe the modern abandonment of the Christian basis, and shall discuss the effects of the modern secularist assumption. Finally, we shall attempt to show that between this assumption, and the acceptance of Christian doctrine and the profession of Christian experience, there is an enormous contradiction. We shall try to make it plain, by a consideration of the Christian conception of God, the doctrines of Incarnation and Atonement, the nature of Christian Experience and the existence of the Church, that the Christian Faith is utterly opposed to the received sanctions of modern society. This, of course, means that, in our view, either modern society or the Christian Faith must disappear, if there is to be a complete unification of theory and practice in the social order ; but even at this early stage of our argument we have no scruple in declaring the conviction that in any case the modern world is dying, and that there is not upon the remotest horizon any promise of the positive renewal of the City of Man, save that ancient promise of the City of God which lives in the heart of the Faith and the Church.

II

THE PROBLEM OF SOCIETY

Upon whatever subject the Greek mind exercised itself, it left a mark which mankind must observe for all time; and perhaps one of the supreme services rendered by a people to the human race was the Greek adventure in political institutions and in political philosophy. All students concur in the dictum that for the Greek mind the πόλις was an ethical society.[1] But what really made it this was, at least originally, a belief in its sanctity. The human relation experienced in the πόλις was believed to have a religious root. There was no possible distinction between State and Church, for religion was an essential function of the social organism—if indeed the social organism was not rather the function of religion. It has been held that Athens and Sparta, for example, were tribe-states, whereof the visible principle of association within the State was consanguinity. The "stem" claimed a common ancestry; but its consciousness of unity was expressed in the cult of a deity. The Athenians were the folk of Athena. There could

[1] I am here specially indebted to the admirable work of Dr Ernest Barker, in his *Greek Political Theory—Plato and his Predecessors*, Methuen, 1918.

be no citizenship for foreigners, because no foreigner could in fact be grafted upon this divinely-rooted racial growth. The inherent relation between the "stem" and its native deity, together with the observed fact of the multiplicity of human stems, made monotheism impossible. The unity of the πόλις, and its separation from all other families of men, were facts whereof the foundation was amongst the gods themselves.

No doubt this account of the origin of the πολις has to be modified. It seems that residential contiguity to some extent operated to create the Greek civic sense, as it certainly did the Roman, so that the place called Athens, and not only the sense of blood-relation, moved the minds and hearts of men to a common allegiance. Yet contiguity also was consecrated by the offices of religion, and the place was holy ground. The mere place, indeed, would have had less power to evoke loyalty, had it not contained the temple of the deity. And so deeply ingrained in the Greek mind was this need of a supernatural basis of social unity, that when consanguinity had become confused and contiguity of residence was being more broadly interpreted, the "Emperor" of the Seleucids, Antiochus Epiphanes, was regarded as a "god manifest," claiming the allegiance of men in a wider confederation.

The Athenians viewed their political association primarily as a mode of ethical culture; and whereas the Romans regarded the State as *imperium*, the Greeks could speak of κοινωνία. And although the Athenian State had its representative institutions, the principle of representation was not the dominant

character of its democracy. There was no need for securing the acceptance of the State by assuring freedom of individual expression. The State was accepted: the Law was an ethos, a sacrosanct body of custom and precedent, the common substance of the corporate life, sanctified by divine approval. The chief emphasis, therefore, was upon education, rather than upon enfranchisement. The task of the State was to bring its members into conscious communion with the "spiritual substance" of the community. The problem for the Greeks was that of bringing the opinions of men into concord with a permanently fixed Law, which was regarded as the unchangeable principle of cohesion. For Pindar, the Law was "King," for Herodotus it was "Master." Plato considered that citizens were its slaves. The Greek democracy consisted in the right of the citizen to receive from the State such education, such spiritual nourishment: to be rightly moulded by the ethos of that corporate life whose origin was in the deity of the city. Thus Aristotle declared: "We must not think that any one of the citizens belongs to himself, but that all belong to the State." And no matter with what degree of belief or scepticism men might regard the official religion, an air of sacredness brooded over the common life of the city, at any rate until the appearance of the younger sophists.

The acceptance of the State's guardianship of the individual was thus a first principle. The Solonian law-givers had established democratic government, not by finding in the populace the source and sanction of the Law, but by providing the people with

power to assure themselves that they were governed in accordance with Law, and not by the momentary caprice of those in office. The Greek, as an individual, had little inclination to emphasize his rights as against the community, for he was unable to conceive himself as an isolated source of "rights," and he would have found it difficult to understand a system of representation which had for its end the continual modification of Law in obedience to the fluctuating opinion of majorities.

The Law, a positive but sacred and divinely-given inheritance of custom and constitutional practice, was thus the unifying principle and basis of authority, the fount of culture, and the sustaining life of the Greek State. Here, then, it might seem, was the ideal State in being. Apparently it needed only some sort of intellectualization, the substitution of a conscious participation in the Absolute for primitive, unreflective loyalty to a civic deity, to become the means of setting forth the whole spiritual significance of human association. But the actual course of reflection revealed difficulties hitherto unguessed, so that even the supreme effort of Plato succeeded rather in defining the problem than in answering it.

The first, uncritical acceptance of the State in which custom, the unchanging δίκη, was regarded as of divine origin, was destined to be destructively undermined by the growth of observation and knowledge. At first the conservative view seemed to be supported by the early perception of natural law. The operation of unchanging law in nature appeared to sanction the permanence of human

custom. But a growing knowledge of the world, with its bewildering variety of customs, gave rise to searching thought; for there now arose the difficulty of showing why the Athenian custom should be considered specially sacred. What was the relation between the various human social orders? Where, indeed, lay the true basis of human society, seeing that societies could be so many and so diverse? To this problem the Sophists addressed themselves, with increasingly alarming and demoralizing results. Protagoras, the empiricist who propounded the doctrine that man is the measure of all things, believed that the primary impulse toward association came from sheer, practical need, and that a "state of nature" had thus naturally issued in society, for the sake of union and preservation. But he considered that the first essays in civilization had been imperfect, until Hermes, sent by Zeus, had brought Reverence and Justice as principles of political knowledge and order amongst men. He thus succeeded in providing the State with a divine sanction; but he left certain grave questions unanswered. He did not explain the variety of political orders amongst various peoples, and he showed no essential connection between the primal impulse to associate, and the heaven-sent Reverence and Justice which perfected that association.

Hippias of Elis, facing the difficulty of the multiplicity of law and custom, pointed to the unwritten moral law observed in all countries, and deemed that since this could not have been enacted by men, whose enacted laws could in many places be changed, it must have been derived from the gods. He was

upon the road to the assertion of a *jus naturale* with supernatural sanctions; but here again arises difficulty. This *jus naturale*, though one and universal, had not expressed itself in a common cohesion of all mankind; and yet it seemed more fundamental than the positive structure of the particular State. Plato presents Hippias as inclining towards the Cynic conception of world-citizenship in a world-city. Whether this does him justice or not, it is certain that Greek inquiry was now establishing a distinction between the moral, or universal, law, and the body of custom which had been accepted as the very life of the particular State. The influence of the Ionic philosophers assisted the Sophistic development.

The Ionics, searching for some principle of unity beneath the multiform appearance of nature, had conceived that all forms of matter were but modifications of some physical substratum. Thus for Thales, the original substance was water. For Anaximenes, it was air. The Pythagoreans had turned away from the search for a material first principle, and had found the supporting basis of the universe in number. But in either case, the permanent reality of the first principle and the contingent and secondary character of the visible modifications, were assumed. In like manner the Sophist moralists attempted to discover beneath the varieties of custom and law a single, all-pervasive law. This, when found, would be the moral and social principle of permanent value, compared with which the positive systems of particular States were but passing and inadequate modifications. But what was this Uni-

versal Law? What was its essential nature? How had it come to exist?

The answer to these questions divided Greek thought into several rival schools. Upon the one hand, the radical sophists tended to the conception that the universal law which created society was nothing more than individual self-interest. Plato presents the statement of the sophistic theory in two forms. Glaucon, in the *Republic*, holds that to do injustice is by nature good; but to suffer injustice is evil. Society becomes possible only because the evil of suffering injustice is greater than the satisfaction of inflicting it. Callicles, in the *Gorgias*, regards all positive laws as the results of contracts made by the weak to defraud the strong of their natural rights. Thrasymachus, in the *Republic*, states this position yet more radically. Right, for him, is simply the enactment of might, and there is in right no quality of transcendent value. Law is right, when and where it can be enforced, and may be broken without scruple by any force sufficiently strong.

It is clear that such doctrines struck at the whole institutional system of society. The law, private morality, and the sanctioning deities, were viewed as conventions. And a similar result was reached by other schools of thought. The Cynics also sought a return from "convention" to "nature." Mendicant beggars, they have been compared with the Franciscans of later times; but it has been well said of them that they "embraced poverty, not for love of the kingdom of heaven, but for hatred of the kingdom of the earth." They were the enemies of property, the family, and the city. They conceived

that "nature" necessitated one undifferentiated humanity; but upon examination their "humanity" seems to mean no more than the actual number of human individuals living in the world, without any inner cohesion or organic unity. The Cyrenaics were equally individualistic. For them, right and wrong were conventions of custom; and the existing societies of men had no deeper foundation. The task of the individual was the pursuit of pleasure, though he might, no doubt, find his pleasure in the welfare of others. Still, it was his pleasure which was the true and only sanction of the man's action. Both Cynics and Cyrenaics agreed that the individual himself is the real measure and standard of pleasure and duty.

What had happened? The unreflective acceptance of social cohesion as divinely ordained and guaranteed, had suffered severely under the criticism of awakened thought. For the attempt to discover a principle of human association which should be of universal application had broken down. The basis of the particular State had been criticized as mere custom, without real intellectual or spiritual root other than superstitious stories; but no such root had been discovered for the desired universal State. The Law of Athens might be shown to be convention; but when the attempt was made to state a doctrine of society which should transcend the narrowness and irrationality of local tradition and include all the families of the earth, the conception of a universal society dissolved, and all that remained was the individual, with his lonely desires and his unassociated will to live.

While philosophic thought was thus making for anarchy, a practical moral scepticism was abroad in daily life, and political confusion was rife upon every side. It was, therefore, to a situation both theoretical and practical that Plato bent the energies of his mind. We have said that his success was rather in stating than in solving the problem. It will suffice here if we briefly study his attempt at solution, as set forth chiefly in the *Republic*, and indicate the nature of his failure.

Perhaps the greatest significance of Plato is that he saw with profound conviction the need for a restatement of belief in a transcendent ground of human society, in the light of the criticism which had assailed the old traditionalism. Reflection must restore an ultimate sanction for social loyalty. This had once been provided in the pious beliefs of an uncritical age, but it had now to be established for the critical intellect. He perceived, moreover, that no such restatement could be of any value, if it did not build upon some general conception of the nature of the universe and the purpose of man's existence. Religion, with its local and "conventional" associations, with its polytheistic setting, seemed incapable of any universal conception. But philosophy, so far, had only succeeded in discrediting the traditional social forms without doing anything to produce a rational society. Plato's political theory is in close relation to his metaphysics; and his metaphysics has a religious glow and enthusiasm. Beneath the schemes and proposals of the *Republic* there is a definite metaphysical substructure. In Plato's view, the basic cause and

origin of human society is not to be found amidst the shadows of this world, but lives transcendent and immutable as the Idea of the Good. It is the Idea of the Good which determines the true nature of society. Because it exists, "justice" may be defined as that quality of soul whereby men reject the irrational desire to grasp and enjoy indiscriminate pleasures, and submit themselves to an ordered service for the sake of a common benefit. The State, therefore, cannot properly be an instrument for the self-satisfaction of its ruler, no matter who that ruler may be, but is the body in which the ruler has only a function. In a true State, the individual secures his own true end by pursuing those of his fellows. Thus the community of interest between the State and the individual, which the radical Sophists had treated with scepticism, is established in a conscious sense of harmonious effort for a common purpose. This purpose, Plato held to be substantiated by an eternal principle; and he sought to demonstrate that the laws of morality, while producing the positive State, were not "conventions," but were securely grounded in the universe and in the soul of man.

He was, nevertheless, bound to admit the imperfect adumbration of the principle offered by the actual State of Athens, and he considered that he must set forth an account of the true social structure indicated by his own metaphysics. What was the precise type of ordered service, what was the nature of the πόλις in which the Idea of the Good would be most faithfully manifested and most surely appropriated in this world? In order to work out his politic, he falls

back upon a tripartite psychology, and argues that since the soul is threefold, compounded of appetite, reason, and the sense of honour, the State must contain this threefold division. Each division will consist of members in whom a particular psychological characteristic is dominant. They shall be rulers, who by long training and philosophic discipline have become capable of the vision of the Idea of the Good. Plato, in the *Republic*, abandons the uses of positive law as the Sophists themselves had done; but he did not allow this to issue in anarchy. The State was made possible, in his view, by the rule of philosophers who should draw guidance directly from the transcendent principle of that very social life which it was their function to preserve. And although in later dialogues he turns back to positive law, believing that this, after all, was necessary for the present ignorance and waywardness of men, we find in *The Laws* a nocturnal assembly of astronomer-philosophers who, drawing their inspiration from their philosophic vision, are really the guiding mind of the State, in spite of the acknowledgment of a positive legal code.

The grandeur of this conception needs no comment. Plato made a heroic attempt to found the city of struggling man upon the eternity of the Idea, and thus to secure for ethical and social relations a dignity and worth which should never pass away. But the reflection of succeeding times has disclosed grave weakness in his politic. In order to discuss this it is not necessary to criticize the metaphysics upon which that politic is erected, for the gravamen of the charge is that Plato does not succeed in show-

ing that his State is the true and proper expression of his own metaphysical principles.

In the first place, the attempt to find a transcendent and eternal ground of human ethical association seems logically to involve that this association shall be considered universal and as wide as humanity. No matter how many or how various the political systems which may exist—and the variety of human types, the differences of geographical situation and historical experience will probably always produce some variety of political order amongst the races of mankind—still, the fundamental ethical basis being one and invisible, they should, it seems, submit to some definite interrelation. Between States all rooted and grounded in the Idea of the Good as the only satisfying human end, there must be some kind of co-operation. The Idea of the Good as the origin and end of society makes for a conception of mankind, for catholicity, for comprehensiveness. Plato, really faced with the task of giving to the *jus naturale* a spiritual content and an adequate embodiment, abandons the latter part of the problem. He does not, indeed, imagine that his State can be free from external relations and limitations; but he is devoid of the notion of a common human society or brotherhood of man. He conceived the Greek world as in some sort a homogeneous society within which the various states should observe rules of conduct inapplicable to the non-Hellenic world; but the Greek world is the limit of his sense of real fellowship.

It may be argued that wider thoughts were not to be expected until the Macedonian empire had transcended the isolation of small States; but Plato

could be sufficiently iconoclastic of established prejudices when he chose, and it remains a weakness in him that he failed to follow to its issue the implication of his own first principles. He was doubtless hampered by what he conceived to be the practical nature of his task. He believed that he was proposing a possible constitution for a Greek State; and, in view of the influence of Spartan models upon him, it may be said that while his proposed constitution was not sufficiently Greek to find acceptance with his countrymen, it nevertheless was too Greek to allow of association with any dream of a federated humanity. It is to be observed, further, that the static nature of the Idea gives no promise of the consummation of such an anticipation, even had Plato entertained it. Yet Plato, amongst all the thinkers of antiquity, did most to press upon the mind and conscience of the world the necessity of securing a unified expression of that eternal principle which is the source and end of human fellowship.

Secondly, we have to observe that although, according to Plato, human society is necessary for the explication of that "justice" which is a quality of the soul and the immediate motive of its search for the Idea of the Good, his proposals nowhere show the whole society in actual contact and communion with the Idea. This failure arises in connection with his attempt to construct the State upon the principles of a faulty psychology. The soul is not divided between the operation of mutually exclusive factors. The ethical principle applies in appetite as in knowledge or in love, and one may eat and drink

to the glory of God, or make of his belly a god. It is, of course, an absurdity to suppose that a State may be divided amongst various psychological classes; and, if it were possible, such a State might involve either a class division so absolute as to make "society" a misnomer, or a unification so rigid as to involve the lower classes in the practical slavery of the servile state of Mr Belloc's fear. But, obviously, if all classes are members of society, and if society arises inevitably through the soul's pursuit of the Idea of the Good, then we must conclude that the ideal State will serve to bring each of its members into communion with the Idea. In Plato's view, however, such communion is reserved only for the philosophers who are the true rulers; and the guidance of the Idea is mediated through them to the mass of the citizens.

Here we light upon a real difficulty. How can a person, a soul, be in an ideal society, and not related in conscious affinity with the root of that society which is also the root of his own moral life? For a person placed in external contiguity with others, but debarred from spiritual access to the eternal ground of human association, the deliverances and ordinances of the philosophic visionaries who are his rulers will have no more authority than the "conventions" of custom, for he has no part or lot in their perception. He accepts them upon an authority which he himself has had no part in constituting. He has no spiritual experience of the source and the end. And thus, for the majority of the members of the State, Plato's solution is no solution. He does not show that the spiritual

foundation of personality and the spiritual foundation of society are one and the same. He preserves social cohesion at the price of practically denying effective personality to the majority of men. For the philosopher, the social sanction is the eternal Idea which he is privileged to behold and with which his soul enjoys communion; but for the masses it is still no more than something visible—the accepted power of the ruling class: a contingent thing, which might at any time become the prey of circumstance.

Plato was, of course, evading the problem of the imperfect man. For the majority he could hope nothing better than that they might submit to the authority of the enlightened. It remains, however, to discover how the majority may be sufficiently enlightened to recognize enlightenment. How shall the common people be assured that any particular dictum of the philosophers is drawn from the eternal Idea, and not from expediency or self-interest? We have seen this problem similarly evaded by political thinkers in modern times. Hegel himself was distrustful of representative institutions, and persuaded himself that Prussian monarchy was the appropriate organ for the expression of that *Sittlichkeit* of which he had so much to say. Carlyle pinned his faith to an aristocracy, and to the "practical heroes" of big business, to drill and bully mankind into a reasonable order of life; but he did not explain how they were to receive permission to begin. Ruskin believed in the paternal authority of the wise merchant, and based his social hope on "the eternal superiority of some men to others," pointing

out the advisability of employing such superior persons as guides. It may be very advisable, provided that we can discover some method of ensuring that the superior will be selected. Matthew Arnold desired to see the enthronement of culture and right reason, but he burked the difficulty of deciding where the enthroning authority might be found. The English positivists preached the need for wise guidance; but it remains to say upon what grounds, and by whom, any particular guidance is to be deemed sufficiently wise for a nation's acceptance.

In any spiritual philosophy of life, this fundamental question must be faced. If society is no more than a quantitative thing, then any method of government, which by force or cajolery keeps the State together, is good enough. But if society and personality are mutually related terms within a spiritual process, no political theory can be adequate which fails to allow personality, as such, some association with the ideal end and therefore some participation in the construction of positive authority. Democracy, in its full implications, is thus a spiritual faith; but in accepting it, we appear to be accepting a violent and tormenting paradox. For we are accepting the average man, with his blindness and selfishness, as a son of God. The ideal State, therefore, could not be democratic, unless some revolution could be inaugurated within the soul of the average man, and Plato had no hope of such a revolution. He went so far as to suppose that some few, under the influence of education, might rise from the ranks of the masses into the company of the philosophers; but he did not dream of the possibility of ordinary men

beholding the Idea and pursuing it in the common toil of their lives. Here again we remember the static character, the impersonal nature, of the Idea. It was as a remote star, invisible to most eyes; but it was not the dayspring from on high which could visit those who walked in darkness.

Nor was such a hope entertained by Aristotle. Lacking Plato's mysticism and visionary power, he yet sought to enforce the truth that the State arises, not in the needs of mere physical life alone, but through the necessities of our moral nature. But he has even less than Plato of genuine faith in the possibilities of all men. For him democracy could be nothing more than a corrupt form of government. His very conception of virtue is aristocratic, and has no place for humility, gentleness, or charity. His political theory contemplates the moral neutrality of some classes, and he does not consider a slave capable of virtue. He believes that men may become god-like in the exercise of pure reason; but for him, morality without philosophy occupies only a secondary place. In this he actually eludes the problem of society as he himself states it—for he has declared that the State arises out of the necessities of the moral life; and it is therefore illogical to describe the supreme human destiny as being apart from morality, unless one is prepared to admit that the philosopher is rightly carried beyond society.

The truth is that Aristotle's conception of personality is less profound and spiritual than Plato's, and consequently his attempt to show that the State issues from the essential requirements of moral life

is vitiated from the start. If Plato failed to understand the full meaning of personality, Aristotle's failure was greater. Obviously, a State arising from the requirements of ethical life can exclude some classes only upon the assumption that they have no part in moral life; and this is to dismiss them from the category of humanity. Aristotle, no doubt, was baffled by the spectacle of life as he saw it, with its grossness, cruelty, greed and shame. It must somehow be guided and moulded by wisdom; and he looked for such guidance to an imaginary aristocracy of reason. He never for a moment dreamed of the possibility of exalting the mass of men to the life of reason and virtue, and therefore he also may be said to have abandoned the problem of society. For, after all, if society is an ethical organ, its function is to provide its members with a conscious relation with the ethical end. And if a perfected social relation be the supreme ethical end, all men, as moral agents, have a right to be counted at least potential members of society. The ethical nature of the soul marks it as destined for the ideal city. And it is an evasion of the issue to assume that whole classes of men may be regarded as beyond the scope of ethical life.

Greek political theory was thus involved in self-contradiction; but this self-contradiction arose first of all in life. Man, born for the city of God, for the pure practice of the common good, his true destiny clearly written in his moral nature, yet lingered in the confusion and brawling selfishness of his poor earthly kingdoms. He was as a king who had never claimed his crown, and a rebel against that

innermost law which was the true sustenance of his being. Plato and Aristotle conceived that no State which had yet appeared was the true satisfaction of the needs of moral life, and thus they show how the Infinite presses upon the life of man, and how man fails to respond. The passing of the great Greek thinkers, the collapse of the Delphic prophetic inspiration, the advancing decay of the old civic order, forced the problem of man's unreconciled life ever more urgently upon the general mind. In a mood of despair, recourse was made to the promise of release held out by the ancient mysteries; but these lacked constructive impulse. The Greeks had stated, and had deeply felt, the problem; but the answer was to come along the line of another tradition, but with a creative force so tremendous that it remains the world's greatest challenge, and is still declared by many, even of the world's most profound and acute minds, to have been the effect of definite, supernatural intervention.

III

CHRISTIANA RES PUBLICA

It is worth while considering the Greek political philosophy, to observe how it struggled toward a clear statement of the fundamental problem, and how it fell short of providing a satisfactory and abiding solution. It is worth while because, in the process of that ardent inquiry, the essential elements of the human situation were disengaged, and the main lines of purely rational approach to the whole question were laid down. It has been said that, for nearly every notion that is put forward as new, there happens to be in Greek thought a theory parallel to it, and very often there is besides a complete refutation of it.[1] At any rate, it must be granted that the problems of political thought which were agitated by the great succession of Greek thinkers, remain as the central problems of all political thought; and by its manner of grasping and solving those problems, any theory of society, any system of civilization, must be judged.

If our brief examination of the course of Greek speculation has done any sort of justice to the subject, we may conclude that the obstinate diffi-

[1] From a newspaper report of a speech by Dr Temple, Bishop of Manchester.

culties with which philosophy was compelled to grapple were three. It was first of all necessary to discover a transcendent basis, an eternal justification, for the life of morality and association. Plato had sought this in the Idea of the Good. Aristotle, rejecting the Platonic doctrine of Ideas, nevertheless held that society arose out of the needs of moral life; but the moral life, according to him, was necessary to the very happiness which men considered to be the true end of their existence. Man, however, was related to God: he was the thought of God becoming self-conscious. Hence whatever is proved to be a vital need of his life, must be seen to be grounded in the *νόησις νόησεως*, the self-existent essence which is God. We have glanced at the inconsistencies in which both thinkers became involved, in the attempt to apply these conceptions in practical politic; but this must not prevent us from seeing how boldly they strove to find a secure philosophical foundation for society. The enormous difficulty, however, was to obtain such general acceptance of any proposed transcendent basis as would make it possible to give effect to the practical implications which this might be held to involve; and here Aristotle was really as helpless as Plato.

Beyond this, moreover, both thinkers failed, in their theoretic construction of the State, to show any spiritual consolidation between all the members of the society and the transcendent ground of their social relation. And this means that, after all, the actual social tie could be nothing moral or spiritual. The great task still remained, to exhibit the ordinary man as related to his fellows in a spiritual process of

imperishable value and significance. And, further, if there were indeed such a process, springing from the eternal ground of the universe, it must be made to include all mankind in one positive moral construction, one conscious, cohesive effort for a single spiritual end. Here again, as we have seen, the Greeks failed; and thus their development fell short of completeness in depth and comprehensiveness. Neither personality nor society received full justice at their hands.

We have said that the solution of these problems came from another quarter, and we shall now maintain that it is given in the Christian revelation, the Christian experience, and the Christian fellowship. But the Christian revelation, while becoming indebted to Greek thought for much of its subsequent formulation and clothing, would have been historically unrelated, in its first incidence, but for the long drama of Jewish history. The problems discovered by the Greeks chiefly under the guise of philosophical antinomies, emerged in the Jewish consciousness as distressing problems of morals. And thus salvation is given through the Jews, and not through the Greeks—through the Jewish tragedy and not through the Greek failure. In their own way, the religious teachers of the Jewish nation were concerned to establish a transcendent sanction of social relations, and this they found in Yahveh, as the Greeks had originally found the centre of their loyalty in Athena. But whereas criticism had undermined the authority of Athena, it is remarkable that the Jews never outgrew Yahveh. The trouble was that He was always outgrowing them. In the

prophetic consciousness, He was revealed as making progressively searching personal and social claims. Hence a great body of Jewish history is occupied with the unique story of a people, intensely and even fanatically patriotic, yet frequently disloyal to their own national deity.

The great struggle in which the religious leaders engaged was not to propound a new and more philosophical social sanction, but to preserve the loyalty of the people to the sanction which they had already accepted. For that sanction was not a principle which, once grasped, may remain static; but a Person whose self-revelation had yet to be completed. Beginning with unreflective racial cohesion around a racial deity, the Jewish nation and the Jewish church were one, upon much the same level of moral and spiritual life as that of the Greeks in their primitive devotion to Athena. But whilst the Greeks continued to clothe Athena with their own characteristics, the Jews were embarrassed by the strange and unexampled experience of a God who attempted to clothe His people with His characteristics. Therefore, whereas the Greek thinkers were forced to seek a satisfactory basis of society in philosophy, the Hebrew prophets had but to appeal to Yahveh, who, first appearing as the God of a few nomadic tribes, had revealed Himself as morally holy, demanding purity of heart, and as the Creator of the whole world and the Director of all nations.

Thus the Hebrew development, reaching a profounder spiritual level than the Greek, involved that within the society each member should come into personal relation with God, who was Himself a

Person. "I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord." [1] At the same time, the Lord of the heart is revealed also as the Lord of all mankind. "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." [2] "It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; . . . that bringeth princes to nothing; he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity." [3] He is "King of nations." The Assyrians are the rod of His anger.[4] Cyrus is His servant.[5] And if, amongst all nations, the Jews had been called to special privileges, this was only that they might be enabled to perform a special service. In their father Abraham, and in his seed, all the families of the earth were to be blessed. "In the latter days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains . . . and peoples shall flow unto it. And many nations shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths . . . and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." [6]

[1] Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. [2] Isa. xl. 5. [3] Isa. xl. 22, 23.
[4] Isa. x. 5. [5] Isa. xlv. 1-5. [6] Mic. iv.

From the moral consciousness of the Jewish people came this profound insight into the heart of man's great problem. The prophets discerned the truth that a personal relation with God, and a universal human fellowship, were principles essentially connected. But the actual course of this people's life was disappointing and indeed tragic. In the estimation of its chief prophets, however, the full measure of the tragedy was to be found, not in the crushing blows delivered by external foes, not in the shattering of the national institutions, not even in the exile of the flower of the nation, but in the spiritual failure of the nation itself, which they believed to be the true source of the outward disasters. This people had been granted a vision, but had been faithless and unresponsive.

After the exile, the development of the sacrificial system indicated a mood of penitence: the growth of the Messianic teaching was evidence of hope. But neither in their penitence nor in their hope did they achieve their proper task and destiny. The Pharisaic moral reform hardened into a narrow and pettifogging ritualism of conduct which had within it no glow of ardent love. The Messianic hope became the flag of racial spite and pride. Jesus was crucified partly because the Jews could not tolerate, or even understand, a Messiah who required yet profounder personal penitence and who was quite untouched by their dreams of national glory. He demanded a painful humility, a rectification in the relation between the soul and God. His conception of the results of this change, as set forth in His pictures of the Kingdom of God, was

merely irritating to their racial self-importance. They destroyed Him, and in doing so destroyed themselves, unwittingly stultifying the whole significance of that long religious tradition which had been entrusted to their keeping.

Out of that culminating tragedy, nevertheless, the final answer to the problem of human society appeared. There arose a new society whereof the acknowledged basis was a positive, self-revealing act of God—as if the Idea of the Good, or the *νόησις νόησεως*, should have become manifest within the broken and forlorn families of men, and carrying so great a compunction to the soul, that it must immediately engage, within a new fellowship, upon a new co-ordination of life. The Church appeared as the redemption of the social tie, in and through the redemption of individuals : a society depending upon a new relation of the soul to God, and hence necessarily overpassing all local and racial bounds. A living, personal experience of the Ultimate Ground of the soul and society, now transforms and reconstructs human fellowship ; and this transformation is actually possible because of the revealed nature of the Ultimate as absolute and illimitable Love, of which the Cross of Calvary is the effective measure. Religion becomes once again the central bond of social loyalty ; but it is a religion whereof the basis is as wide as the sanctions sought by philosophy. The universality of its application, however, is involved in the very depth of its penetration of personality. It contemplates no exclusion of any class or section from the life-giving vision, and it

promises a city in which all citizens shall be crowned and enthroned.

The practical efficacy and the various implications of this Faith we shall consider as we proceed; but we must at the outset distinguish carefully between the true function of Christianity, and the function of religion in society as that has been set forth in recent times by Mr Kidd. He supposed that between society and the individual there might exist an irreconcilable dualism of interest, and that in this conflict religion would be of service in reconciling the individual to becoming the mere means to a social end in which he could find no place. The Christian Faith sets forth the social end as identical with the true destiny of the soul; and by this end both the soul and society are to be shaped and moulded. Religion, therefore, is vastly more than a private consolation: it is a public dynamic. But so rich is the complexity of its reference, so surely does it reveal the spiritual foundation of life, that in touching the most secret and tender places of the heart it needs no other message than that by which it will quell tyrants and reshape the kingdoms of the earth: the message of the Love of God made visible in Christ. For Christianity, the perfection of the soul and the perfection of society are one process, proceeding from a single source; and this is possible because the salvation of man is wrought by a Person who is also the very principle innate in the structure of the universe.

The Fourth Gospel, perhaps most noticeably of all the New Testament documents, boldly sets out to establish this; and its method is to identify Jesus

with the Logos. The sources of the Prologue are said to be two. In the first place, there are in the Old Testament traces of a conception of a creative word of God. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." [1] "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please." [2] And in Proverbs there is the well-known passage, spoken by the Divine Wisdom. "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. . . . When he prepared the heavens I was there: . . . when he set a circle upon the face of the deep: . . . Then I was by him as a master workman: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in his habitable earth; and my delight was with the sons of men." [3] But not even in this remarkable utterance can it be said that the notion of a creative Word or Wisdom of God received philosophical formulation amongst the Hebrews.

In the second place, we have in Greek thought what may be called a philosophical tradition of the Logos, beginning with the conception of Heraclitus, wherein the Logos controls the rhythm of the perpetual passing of being and non-being into each other; moving perhaps through the νοῦς of Anaxagoras, and eventually becoming the Logos or νοῦς of the Stoics, conceived as the purest expression of the soul, the distinctively human

[1] Ps. xxxiii. 6. [2] Isa. lv. 11. [3] Prov. viii. 22-31.

characteristic, and yet as connecting mankind with God.

Philo, before the Fourth Gospel was written, had attempted to unite these two strains of thought—the speculative perception of the Greeks and the religious perception of the Jews. In his system the Logos has a central place: it is the power of God, or the divine Reason, possessing energy, and comprehending in itself all inferior powers. The Logos, indeed, is the first-born of God. But, so far, neither in the Jewish nor in the Greek tradition, nor in Philo's attempted synthesis, do we discover the Logos as the sufficient ground of human society, or even of human personality. Philo, combining the two lines of thought, cannot regard the Logos as identical with God, or as personal, or as possibly incarnate as the Messiah of the Jews. In the Fourth Gospel, the Logos is identified with God, and is discovered incarnate in Jesus Christ. And what the Fourth Gospel effects for thought is a conception of God, not only as transcendent (as the Jews had believed), and not only immanent (as impersonal doctrines of pantheism can easily hold), but as personal in His immanence and incarnation—a doctrine much more difficult for philosophy to achieve. In the incarnate Logos we may behold the eternal and ultimate source and principle of all things visible and invisible. Jesus Christ is not only the truth of God, but, since He is the creative Logos, He is the truth of the world, and of man. Nothing can possess a significance which is beyond Him: and He is love made manifest. It is His love, therefore, which is at once the expression of the Divine nature and the true

architectonic of the world, the soul, and society. Christ has come, not only to convert the heart, but to overcome the world; and faith in Him is not merely a refuge for the individual fleeing in dismay from the mechanical and crushing dictates of a social structure which cannot be reconciled with the heart's deepest longings: it becomes the medium of a new social relation, and the means of recreating and redirecting the whole method of human association.

The Fourth Gospel, of course, only sets forth, in a particular terminology, implications which are to be found throughout the whole of the New Testament. There we are presented with the process of the realization of a new social relation of men mystically connected with Christ, institutionally bound together in the Church, morally committed to behaviour in accordance with the divine self-offering displayed in their redemption, and assisted by the gift of the Holy Spirit, leading them into communion with the Triunity of God and to the complete consummation of the social impulse.

The Incarnation is consistently set forth in the New Testament as producing three capital and organically related results. It is the means of raising the soul to a new communion with God. It effects a new social relation. And it involves the universal extension of this experience and of this fellowship, to the whole human race. In the experience of mystical union with Christ, men believed themselves to be actually elevated to a higher level of life, upon which the old, stubborn problems, which had baffled the best minds, were no longer

intractable. The soul is at one with its infinite Source, and this intimacy is no longer for a chosen few, but may be the privilege of all who are prepared to accept it upon the necessary conditions. The problem of the imperfect man is in process of solution, for the soul of the vilest or the most obscure may be beautified and strengthened from infinite resources. This mystical union with Christ is therefore the basis of a new democracy; and it is propounded throughout the New Testament.

In the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus is represented as calling men into a relation with Himself of such sort that their souls shall thereby find rest from the weariness and heavy loads of the world.[1] So deeply is He to become the principle of their personality, that in losing their life for His sake, they shall find it.[2] And of such significance is His relation with the soul that the confession of His name before men is a deed which ratifies the soul before God.[3] In the Fourth Gospel He is the Good Shepherd who knows His own and is known by them. They hear His voice and cannot be snatched from His hand.[4] He is the Bread of Life and they who come to Him shall never hunger.[5] The water that He gives shall be in a man as a well of water springing up unto eternal life.[6] He is the vine, of which His disciples are branches, and they are required to abide in Him as He will abide in them. In the great prayer, at the Last Supper, He makes the declaration that He has given to His disciples the glory which He had

[1] Matt. xi. 28-30. [2] Luke ix. 23, 24. [3] Matt. x. 32.
[4] John x. [5] John vi. 35. [6] John iv. 14.

received from the Father, and prays that they may be one—" I in them, and thou in me." [1]

Perhaps the central emphasis of St Paul is upon his own experience of this mystical union. He has been crucified with Christ, he announces, yet he lives; and yet no longer he, but Christ lives in him.[2] For him to live is Christ.[3] And he regards this consciousness as essentially characteristic of Christians. " All we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life." [4] Thus his readers are to reckon themselves " alive unto God in Christ Jesus." [5] Christ is in them, " the hope of glory," [6] and their " life is hid with Christ in God." [7] And the New Testament closes with this same mystical relation implied in the promise of the glorified Lord to " come in and sup " with any man who will " open the door " ; [8] while the victorious faithful are called to sit upon His throne, with His name in their foreheads, and in the sight of His face attaining their greatest reward.

But accompanying this varied presentation of a single Christian truth, there is in the New Testament an equal emphasis upon another conception. The mystical union of the soul with Christ has for its inevitable issue the union and consolidation of men in a new social relation. The Synoptic writers present Jesus, not as content with sporadic preaching and occasional conversation with individuals, but as

[1] John xvii. 22, 23. [2] Gal. ii. 20. [3] Phil. i. 21.
[4] Rom. vi. 3, 4. [5] Rom. vi. 11. [6] Col. i. 27.
[7] Col. iii. 3. [8] Rev. iii. 20.

calling into existence a definite fellowship. Moreover, He proclaimed His gospel in social terms, preaching the Kingdom of God, and revealing the principles of its cohesion in laws of love, service, forgiveness and humility. The Fourth Gospel, in some of the very similes under which it sets forth the union of the individual soul with Christ, denotes its necessary union with others. The branches of the vine share one organic life, and the sheep are to be of one flock. The Acts of the Apostles shows this principle in operation. There is no conscious and deliberate scheme to make a "church"—and this has misled some modern readers into the false conclusion that the Church was an unfortunate and haphazard development. The truth is that the Church was the inevitable issue of Christian experience: inevitable and immediate—so immediate that the experience and the Church cannot in practice be fruitfully separated. In The Acts those who "were being saved" found themselves quite naturally being added to the Church. The very nature of their salvation drew them into the fellowship of the apostles.[1]

St Paul, likewise, declares that his converts who had been "strangers" and "sojourners," are now fellow-citizens of the saints, and of the household of God.[2] He desires that all men shall see what is "the fellowship of the mystery."[3] The Christian Society is, for him, the body of Christ, in which all the members are closely interdependent.[4] The Epistle to the Hebrews regards believers as having come unto "the city of the living God, the heavenly

[1] Acts ii. 41-47. [2] Eph. ii. [3] Eph. iii. 9. [4] 1 Cor. xii.

Jerusalem," to the "general assembly and church of the first-born."[1] The first Johannine epistle marks the love of the brethren as the supreme evidence of the soul's passing from death unto life; and the mystical power of Christ in the soul effects a willingness to "lay down our lives for the brethren."[2] And finally, The Apocalypse exhibits the society of Christ, gloriously bedecked and radiant with supernatural light, coming down from God out of heaven, to conquer and take possession of the kingdoms of this world. And the concord and correlation of the heavenly city rise to symbolic expression in a solemn music, like the sound of many waters.[3]

From participation in the experience of mystical union with Christ, and in the redeemed fellowship of the faithful, none is debarred. The application of the Gospel is universal, and this is both logically and morally implied in the doctrine that the Saviour is the Eternal Son of God, and the Word that was in the beginning with God and was God. If the universal intention of the Gospel is not frequently explicit in the Synoptic writers, they certainly imply it at every step. Jesus is hailed as the light which is to lighten the Gentiles.[4] He is reported as deliberately reproving the racial exclusiveness of His fellow-countrymen, in the parable of the Good Samaritan.[5] He is said to have commissioned His apostles to go into all the world and to preach the Gospel to every creature.[6] In the Fourth Gospel, He is "the true

[1] Heb. xii. 22-24.
[2] 1 John iii. 14-16.
[3] Rev. xiv. 1, 2; xxi. 9-27.
[4] Matt. iv. 16; Luke ii. 32.
[5] Luke x. 30-37.
[6] Matt. xxviii. 18-20.

light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." [1] He is recognized by John the Baptist as " the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." [2] It is declared of Him that He was given by God, because " God so loved the world." [3] He describes Himself as " the light of the world." [4] He declares that being " lifted up," He will " draw all men " unto Himself.[5] He has " other sheep " which are not of " this "—presumably the Jewish—fold ; and them also must He bring.[6]

St Paul, whose missionary labours would have been impossible without this universal outlook, is convinced that in Christ there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free.[7] The attempt to exclude the Gentiles from the Christian society, or to admit them only under irksome conditions, was bound to break down, because of the very impetus of the Faith which declared Jesus Christ identical with the ultimate ground of existence ; for " at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth." [8] This was not only a Pauline contention. It is implicit in the Johannine saying, " the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world " ; [9] and it is elaborated in the Epistle to the Hebrews, wherein Jesus, the heir of all things, tasting death for every man, brings many sons unto glory.[10] The same view is carried to its completion in The Apocalypse, where the exalted Christ is praised by

[1] John i. 9.
[2] John i. 29.
[3] John iii. 16.
[4] John viii. 12 ; ix. 5.
[5] John xii. 32.
[6] John x. 16.
[7] Col. iii. 11.
[8] Eph. i. 20-23 ; Phil. ii. 9-11.
[9] 1 John iv. 14.
[10] Heb. ii. 9, 10.

those who have been redeemed " out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation," and the nations of them that are saved walk in the light of the City of God, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honour into it.[1]

The question must now be asked, what precisely was intended to be the relation between this new Christian Society, and the established societies of men ? Were they to move upon unrelated planes ? Some have regretted that the Church ever made practical contact with the world. Others declare that the Church's capital error, amounting to a betrayal of her trust, was in her assumption that she was anything more than a temporary sign and witness of the Kingdom of God which was to come, and by which she was to be replaced. It was in that Kingdom, and not in the blundering and imperfect Church, that the problem of human society was to be solved. A little reflection, however, may convince us that any such separation or antithesis between Church and Kingdom is both logically and spiritually impossible. Hence it must be beside the mark to regret that the Church should have carried social and political significance ; though, of course, she may be justly blamed if her social and political witness be actually contradictory of her own intrinsic meaning.

The Acts of the Apostles, and several of the New Testament epistles, show us the Christian Society in its genesis and early growth. For our present purpose the most conspicuous feature of its history is that although it was identified with no particular

[1] Rev. v. 9 ; vii. 9 ; xxi. 24, 26.

racial ambitions, had no alliance with any political party, and was composed of people living in widely separated parts of the world—people of various language and tradition—the Church was speedily subjected to persecution, at first by the fanaticism of the Jews, and afterwards by the Roman power which was apt to boast of its own tolerance. Possibly religious sentimentalism has had the result of obscuring the real issue of the persecution in the Empire; and we have lately seen a tendency to sympathize with wise and liberal Roman administrators, distracted and perplexed by groups of impossible extremists who made their religion an excuse for evading their social duties. This, however, is nonsense, unless we are prepared to say either that the Christians were practising a gigantic fraud, or that they were the innocent victims of sheer delusion. If their Faith had any valid objective ground, some sort of conflict with the established power was inevitable.

It is true that the Church was primarily and essentially a religious body: it is equally true that in loyalty to its religious faith it came into violent collision with the Imperial Government. This consideration alone is sufficient to dispose of the suggestion that the Church is entirely distinct from the Kingdom of God—a tentative expedient, an instrument which may or may not prove successful, but is at all events to be replaced by the promised reality of the Kingdom. The Church's implications certainly need to be expressed throughout every sphere of human life; but within the Church is already realized the revolutionary principle which is

the heart of the Kingdom.[1] This principle, as we have seen, is threefold : The new spiritual obedience of men in union with Christ ; the new fellowship involved in their very experience of salvation ; and the new universalism by force of which they seek to extend this fellowship amongst all mankind. The Church, essentially evangelical, catholic and missionary, necessarily came into collision with the Empire. The question to be decided was whether the secular power of Rome was to remain the basis of human association, the principle of human cohesion, and therefore the ultimate sanction of human obedience ; or whether these functions were now to be performed by Christ. Obviously, had not the Church contained within itself the vital, creative principle of the Kingdom of God, this conflict could never have taken place. It was impossible for the new fellowship to remain a society for spiritual ends insulated from all social and political effect, because its spiritual ends inevitably and immediately involved it in contradicting the fundamental postulate of contemporary politics.

The Church appears as non-political, only because it stands in contrast with the organization of the

[1] Our argument is not that there is no variety of functions in corporate life, or that these are not best discharged by different people. The contention is that the ground of spiritual fellowship must necessarily be the ground of the whole political, social and economic association. State and Church may be harmfully confused ; but they may be disastrously separated. And these two things may be done at the same time—indeed the double mistake is the source of much modern trouble, both in religion and in practice. We do not desire to see ecclesiastics again become statesmen and diplomats ; but we desire to see the Church become the inspiration of statesmanship and diplomacy—as of engineering and bricklaying.

Roman Empire, and with all previous types of human association. It claimed that it had been called into existence by an ineffable act of divine love and condescension, and it was therefore a society of grace. It was built, not upon the adjustment of the conflicting rights of its members, but upon their common acknowledgment that they had no rights; not upon the motive of gain, but upon the motive of sacrifice and service. It was protected not by force, but only by its faith. Its final authority was the Wounded Lamb, the tenderness and modesty of God, as seen in Christ. Its labours could bring no prestige to any earthly race or government, but could only exalt the name of the crucified Galilean. No matter how far short of its own principles it may have fallen, even from early times, it preserved the distinction between itself and the world, and maintained it with sufficient clearness for many generations. As Mr Belloc has justly observed, to anyone living in the Empire in the period after the reign of Marcus Aurelius, the Church would appear as "a true political organism—the only subsidiary organism which had risen within the general body of the Empire." [1]

The terms upon which the Church and the world eventually came to live together, and particularly the events which took place under Constantine, have afforded scope for interminable controversy. We shall presently attempt to indicate some of the causes of the Church's failure. But it must not be forgotten that for centuries there remained in the

[1] *Europe and the Faith*, p. 61.

world a Christian philosophy of society, achieving more exact definition as the historical movement gave it opportunity, and that for centuries the world's most distinguished thinkers could assume that the society in which they lived bore, in its fundamental structure, some relation to the philosophy and the Faith which they accepted. And whatever may have been the degree of correspondence or contradiction between theory and fact, it is important that we should notice the main ideas of the *Christiana Res publica*, as these were elucidated by the great Christian thinkers.

It was not to be expected that such elucidation would be called for in the primitive age of the Church. She was then closely occupied with the task of providing her Faith with intellectual formulation, and was perpetually in controversy with rival pagan and gnostic systems. Moreover, the Christian body within the Empire was as yet too small to raise the issue in practical form. In the fourth and fifth centuries, however, events took place which made it necessary that a Christian philosophy of society should be stated. The Emperor Constantine had given imperial recognition to the Faith. By the Edict of Milan, in A.D. 313, Christians had received civil rights, and toleration was granted to their religion. In 324, pagan worship was suppressed and Christianity became the State religion. But toward the end of the century, the barbarian menace upon the borders of the Empire assumed a threatening aspect. The appearance of Alaric as an invader in Thrace and Macedon in 395, began to cause grave disquiet; and the worst fears were realized when he

arrived at the gates of Rome in 409, and compelled the submission of the city.

This portentous event seemed like ultimate catastrophe and the shaking of the very foundations of the world. It was a vivid signal of the collapse of the old, imperial organization, and of the breaking of the Roman mould. Charges were hurled against the Christian religion, which was accused of being the real reason of the lamentable cataclysm; and in these circumstances the first attempt was made to formulate a Christian philosophy of history and a Christian conception of society. The author of this attempt was, of course, St Augustine, in his *De Civitate Dei*, begun by him three years after the Visigoths had sacked Rome.

Its purpose was to justify the Christian Faith and the Church against those who alleged that these were responsible for the huge and universal chaos of the time. The author appeals to history, showing that the fate of Rome was no unique event: that other empires had collapsed, before the Christian Faith was born; and that even Rome herself had experienced previous calamities. The fall of earthly states he held to be due to the vices of men. He saw that the unperfected human will could not produce an abiding cohesion; and the successive attempts at human organization throughout history, all alike coming to failure and decline, he beholds as the *Civitas Terrena*. Opposed to this is the enduring *Civitas Dei*, now manifest in the Christian Church. Much of St Augustine's history is fanciful enough—for example, his notion that Cain was the founder of the *Civitas Terrena*, and Abel the founder of the

City of God in this world. But beneath this fancifulness there is a genuine philosophy.

The Stoics, of an intellectual descent tracing back to the Cynics and the older Sophists, had supposed that the institutions of the State were not primitive, but merely conventional. They held that the primitive condition of man was one of innocent happiness; but that, as Seneca taught, the appearance of avarice and ambition had rendered this condition no longer possible. The organization of the State, therefore, was necessary for coercing the evil tendencies of human nature. This view of a "primitive catastrophe" was capable of being harmonized with the Christian doctrine of the Fall; and St Augustine had little difficulty in accepting the view of government which it implies. And although he is committed to theological interpretations which may not commend themselves to-day, his fundamental position may be stated without regard to them. The real *motif* of his argument is that man is sinful, and that human association is therefore imperfect in its aims and methods. He does not, indeed, conceive that government is illegitimate or essentially evil, but rather that it is the hard, though inevitable, outcome of sin. It is true that he does not hold the Platonic view of the State. The meaning of his thesis is rather that no human government can perform the functions desiderated by Plato. And it must be remembered that Plato was in opposition to the existing State, and failed, moreover, to secure the adoption of his own ideal scheme.

The realization of Plato's desire for a wise and

adequate social order, in the opinion of St Augustine, could only be effected by divine intervention. Such intervention had occurred in history, culminating in the Christian revelation; and this is the only secure ground and authority for the social structure. It is unfair to argue, as some have done, that St Augustine's view was really Manichæan, in contrasting the spiritual with the temporal. The contemporary happenings may well have depressed any man's faith in the value of this changing and chaotic world; but in St Augustine's fundamental doctrine no radical and essential opposition between the spiritual and the temporal is involved. The writer's language must not mislead us as to the real nature of his argument. What he actually contrasts with the spiritual is the temporal as it had been shaped by the perverted human will. And over against the inadequate and fugitive societies of men he sets the divinely inaugurated society which is, presumably, to be manifested in the temporal world because it is already adumbrated in the visible Church.

The contemporary political and intellectual conditions rendered it impossible for St Augustine's philosophy to take more definite shape. It is difficult to say where precisely, in his view, the limits of the *Civitas Terrena* and the *Civitas Dei* are to be found. He does not make it clear that the former is to be rigidly identified with the earthly State, or whether the latter, so far as it appears in this world, is exactly coterminous with the Church. But it was well-nigh impossible at the time for any thinker to be clear about these questions. The State had accepted the Christian Faith; but no

great period had elapsed since it was cruelly persecuting the Christians. The Church, on the other hand, had been a religious body within an alien political society; but the political society seemed now to be falling to pieces, and the Church appeared likely to become an organizing political power. The question of the relation between Church and State was in a condition of flux, and could not be properly discussed until the broad lines of Christian civilization began to reveal themselves; and centuries of storm and trouble were destined to pass, before an organized Christendom emerged from the welter of barbarian conflict. The vital doctrine of St Augustine may nevertheless be briefly expressed. He was concerned to declare that the societies of this world must continue to fall into confusion, until the social relation of men should be built upon the Divine Foundation; and that this divinely-founded city, so far from being a dream or a guess, was being shaped in the world, was even then present amongst men, and was the only society capable of enduring.

With the passing of the Dark Ages and the rise of the mediæval order, Christian thinkers were able to make much more definite assumptions and to reach more clearly-articulated conclusions. It was possible for mediæval thought, as it had not been for St Augustine, to set out from the idea of a single, visible social whole. The Church was no longer confronted by a self-conscious and jealous paganism. She seemed secure, and the princes and peoples of the West were her children. Thus, in the twelfth century we have the first attempt to work out in

detail the comparison of society at large, and of every smaller group, to a body. This attempt was made in the *Policraticus* of John of Salisbury, the friend of Becket, and subsequently Bishop of Chartres. Whereas the actual situation of St Augustine's time had made it impossible for him to consider the existing society as a whole, John of Salisbury could assume this, and could advocate the closest co-operation between Church and State, likening the spiritual power to the soul of the body-politic, and the temporal power to the head. These two powers were properly to be found co-ordinated both in Christendom at large, and in each particular community.

It is of the first importance to observe that the *Policraticus* teaches that the *salus publica* must result from the *salus singulorum et omnium*. The true foundation of morality is the personal communion of the individual with God; but the result of this communion is the totality of the *Res publica Christiana*. The lowliest members of the body are capable of spiritual converse with God, are quickened by the supernatural life which animates the whole, and are thus an integral part of the community. The secular government is not an end in itself, nor is its authority absolute. The prince is the minister of the spiritual power, and his positive law must conform to the divinely revealed law. His authority is functional, and exists only that he may minister to the needs of all; and failure to perform this function may be punished by the forfeiture of his crown. For his actual enthronement, the prince is dependent upon the popular will,

the *Policraticus* applying here the principles of certain clerical opinion in the tenth and eleventh centuries with regard to the episcopate. The bishop, it had been held, should be elected by the clergy and people of the diocese. John of Salisbury had no scruple in claiming that the appointment of the secular ruler must similarly carry the agreement of the whole body-politic.

The underlying conceptions of this scheme are sufficiently clear. The theory is that society is now reorganized by a supernatural energy which had entered the world in Christ. The cohesion of society depends upon the cohesion of each individual with the spiritual Source; and out of this inner conjunction and association of men there arises a visible consolidation within which proceeds the entire activity of human life. This activity has two broad aspects—the organization of prayer and devotion which is controlled by the Church; and the organization of the material means of existence which is controlled by the secular prince. Society, however, is but one body, and therefore the supremacy of control must lie with that power which is concerned chiefly with the supreme end of its being; for through the Church flow those forces which shape and characterize the whole society. Within the *Res publica Christiana*, therefore, there can be no concern which is unrelated to the primal principle of the Christian revelation. This was the formulation of a Christian politic as attempted by the sincere and powerful mind of John of Salisbury. And it is well to remark that he was no ecclesiastical bigot, playing for the advantage of his party. He shows

himself a searching critic of the shortcomings of the clergy. But he believed that he was enunciating the fundamental principles of the civilization of his day; and for him, the reality of the Faith as the only credible basis of association and culture, indicates such a conception of society as we have outlined.

The assumptions made in the *Policraticus* remained secure in the next century, when St Thomas Aquinas, engaging upon his universal theology, ventured to state once more the political and social implications of the Christian religion. In his view, man is created not only for a natural end, but for the spiritual end of union with God. The spiritual end is to be attained by a life of grace and by the exercise of virtue; and therefore human salvation must be worked out in society. Within the natural order man discovers the means to the spiritual end, and it is therefore the function of the temporal sovereign to procure the due provision of those means. But since the end of life is spiritual, the spiritual ruler must exercise supervision of the means by which that end is to be attained. The spiritual ruler was, of course, the Pope, Christ's vice-regent upon earth, whose function was to provide for men as members of a supernatural commonwealth. St Thomas, however, did not conceive the papal priority as a mechanical dictatorship. It was the organ of a spiritual democracy which was a coherent unity. The whole contemporary culture, based upon the conviction of unity beneath no matter how great variety, and fortified by the general acceptance of Canon Law, made possible the position of Rome as supreme arbiter.

The unity of society, in St Thomas' judgment, was not imposed from without, but was achieved from within. The individual is "the individual substance of a rational nature," and Aquinas builds upon the scholastic doctrine that true value lies in the individual alone. The individual enters into the social order as an integral part, and society exists, not for itself only, but for the good of its members. Its end is identical with that of the person. The source of its authority is God: and authority, passing to the whole society, is conveyed by its consolidated members to be held in trust by a ruler; and this principle applies both in State and Church. Under God, the people is sovereign. And, in the last analysis, the sanctions of this democracy reside in the union of each soul with God and in the nature of the human relationship arising therefrom.

The formative ideas of the mediæval politic were therefore religious;[1] and although it is sufficiently easy to point to wide discrepancies between mediæval fact and theory, it remains true that the theory as set forth by John of Salisbury or St Thomas Aquinas was not entirely an extravagant misrepresentation, but did formulate with some measure of truth the ideals which were shaping the contemporary civilization. An order had arisen within the confused strife of the barbarous peoples who had overwhelmed the ancient Empire. At the head of that order stood Pope and Emperor, both bound

[1] For a succinct account of the mediæval Christian theory, see *Social and Political Ideas of some Mediæval Thinkers*, edited by Dr Hearnshaw. Harrap, 1923.

to confess Christ; both required to maintain a society which was publicly recognized as a spiritual commonwealth. The primacy of the spiritual was held to be secured by the fact of Rome's right of final arbitrament; and thus, as between Church and State, there was theoretically no possibility of such fatal rupture as would ever carry any Christian State out of the body of Christendom. If between the State and any of its citizens conflict of interest should arise, there was a constant court of appeal in the Church, and both the State and the man were ultimately amenable to the spiritual authority. There was no theoretic possibility of the State, as a self-sufficient and independent source of authority, claiming complete power over the freedom and lives of its citizens, or setting up to provide them with a moral standard of its own manufacture.

Here, then, it would seem, the three essential elements of society as disclosed in the Christian revelation were in a fair way to become realized. It is unquestionable that under the teaching of the Church, reinforced by the scholastic metaphysics, the value of the individual human being became more deeply appreciated than ever before. The inherent sanctity of personality, no matter how frequently forgotten in the rough and tumble of actual life, or how imperfectly delivered from ancient shackles, was a principle really forming the civilization of the period. And it is equally certain that this principle was derived from the genius of the Christian Faith. Since God Himself had come to earth amongst the poorest, social distinctions must cease to be of basic importance. The rulers of the

Church, the Pope himself who sat in the loftiest seat and chastened kings, might spring from the humblest origins; and the real reason was that the Church could not deny that a poor man might be a great Christian and a great saint. This involved the democratic conception of secular government which we find in John of Salisbury and St Thomas Aquinas, with their attribution of authority to the people, since the spiritual fact must determine the temporal means of its realization.

Again, we observe that the assumption of the unimpeded access of the individual to the transcendent, and the consequent emphasis upon individual worth, led, not to the dissolution of social ties and the abrogation of positive institutions, but to a fresh and richer correlation. The remains of the Western Empire, together with the wild forces which had shattered it, were now contained within a living synthesis, whereof the root was said to be one and divine. And, finally, the outlook of this society was universal. The Dark Ages had issued in the mediæval system chiefly perhaps as the result of a heroic missionary effort carried on by the Church amongst the pagan peoples; and the Church never formally declined the duty of evangelizing the world. Dominicans and Franciscans were still wrestling with the flood of Islam in Northern Africa and Western Asia, when the mediæval Church had passed the zenith of its glory; and in the sixteenth century, while Christendom was apparently in process of dismemberment, Francis Xavier was carrying the Gospel which had created it to the peoples of India and Japan.

How came it to pass, then, that this system so signally collapsed? The causes have been debated from diametrically opposed points of view, with widely different conclusions. To some minds the violent transition from the Middle Ages to the modern world was produced by the rise of humane influence, the growth of enlightenment, the nobler energizing of the spirit of man. To others it was the outcome of human weakness, and may have been even the work of Satanic powers. Some see in the change a cause for thanksgiving alone: others regard it as unmitigated catastrophe. It is not necessary for us to attempt to elucidate the secondary causes. The primary causes were few and simple. Mediæval theory, as we have examined it, was not so completely unrelated to mediæval practice as is sometimes imagined; but no competent student will deny that it ran ahead of practice, and overlooked certain anomalies in the actual situation.

In the first place, by its very universalism, the Church had been led into temptation. "Mass conversions" in the missionary effort had secured religious conformity in many places where genuine spiritual life was little known. Hence the assumption of a society composed of individuals in communion with God was often but slightly justified; and this meant in practice that the Church was compromising. The people were not prepared for the complete acceptance of the ethical demands of the Faith, and everywhere there were traces of such compromise upon the part of an authority which claimed to be absolute. This weakness had afflicted the Church from early days, and under

Constantine she had consented to the " recognition " of a State from which cruelty and violence had not been exorcized; and unfortunately, perhaps, Gregory the Great had been almost compelled to accept a jurisdiction in temporal affairs, owing to the breakdown of secular authority. The Church thus extended the name of her Faith over populations which were not deeply touched by its spirit. Their education was slow and painful, and before it could be completed, disaster had befallen the Church itself. The mould was broken asunder before the vessel was made. The common soul of man in Western Europe was not sufficiently prepared for the enormous moral effort of achieving a spiritual commonwealth, and the *Res publica Christiana* was never quite a commonwealth and never quite Christian.

Secondly, and partly because of this failure in individual religion, the philosophy of authority was never consistently realized in practice. To mortal men still sinners, the authority of God must be irksome; and no matter how pure and true the Church had been, the struggle to obtain the acceptance of her standards in the public law of Europe must have been immense. Kings and princes were mortal men, who were supposed to be the ministers of the Church; but they were for the most part sinners who not seldom sought to serve themselves. Had the Church never spoiled her witness by any compromise with militarism or mammon, she might have won. But the theory of the Papal authority had never been precisely worked out; and in practice the spiritual and democratic sanctions of Rome's

arbitrament in a religious republic were too easily exchanged for what was eventually nothing more than a wire-pulling dictatorship of the worst sort. This meant that the keystone of the arch was rotten. If the Church's own authority could be bought and sold, the economic and political application of the Faith urged by Aquinas could never hope to win the complete consent of men ; and even the partial practice, then in operation, must fail before the released forces of secularism and selfishness.

Finally, the growing strength and self-consciousness of national life, occurring when the other causes were fully operative, led to a situation in which an authority now carrying little moral weight, and applying methods inconsistent with its own alleged nature, could exercise no correlating and harmonizing influence. Jealous for its own temporal powers and possessions, the Papacy became rather a source of exacerbation than of unity amongst the rising nations of Europe.

The mediæval structure was destroyed by its own inner stresses, discovering its own flaws. Its theory was almost perfect ; but it had proceeded upon a too hasty assumption that its theory was sufficiently reflected in fact. Wiser and better leadership would have perfected fact into harmony with theory : would have evangelized and spiritualized kings and peoples, actualized democracy, progressively banished war and established universal co-operation. We behold instead an incomplete, though brilliant, essay in human association based in theory upon Christian dogma, but eventually shirking the implications of the Faith. We see a beautiful dream, brief and

broken. But that dream will have to be realized more perfectly, if the life of man is to reach lasting dignity and honour.

The wreckage of mediævalism was strewn across the European centuries, and other forces moulded other systems. In the reaction against these latter, democrats and reformers are frequently found entertaining the curious illusion that they are fighting the lingering fortresses of the Middle Ages. And Christian dogma, which those ages received, is supposed to be the arch-enemy; the ages of Faith being adduced as proof thereof. We shall attempt to show that, on the contrary, the rejection of the Christian dogma and its temporal implications was disastrous for the human cause. The Middle Ages failed, not because they had faith, but because they had not quite enough faith. But they left the world a vision which haunts the mind and conscience of mankind even now, and becomes ever more urgent as the impossibility of the modern system becomes more and more apparent. For the modern world, with its proud and sky-scraping secularism, has taught men that the roots of their life and the foundations of their cities are in the earth. But we can never behold the soaring Gothic of a cathedral, lifting itself as though to declare that its true foundations are on high, without feeling a sudden panic of shame and rebuke.

IV

SECULARISM

No matter what estimate be formed of the relative merits of the mediæval and modern systems, it is of vital importance that we should understand one fact, namely, that modern conceptions of society were inaugurated by a definite departure from the faith that the Christian Revelation and experience could constitute the social foundation. This means that the new movements proceeded in an entirely different world of thought and sanction. It means that the Christian religion was theoretically removed from its place in the affairs of men ; and had not this theoretic change produced considerable effect in practice, the rending of the Church itself at the Reformation would have been impossible. Men deliberately turned their backs upon Christian doctrine as determining the nature of human association, and sought authority elsewhere.

Perhaps the first breath of coming change is to be felt in Dante, who, ardently longing for human unity, involved himself in a hopeless dualism between the Law and the Gospel and attempted to employ the former as the ground of this world's government. The *De Monarchia* holds that since man was created for some end, and is gregarious, the end must be

realized by the whole human race. Moreover, man's "potential intellect," his capacity for greater achievement than is possible at any particular moment, makes human multiplicity necessary, in order that human potentiality may be actualized. But the end of human activity is "speculation"; and this necessitates peace, which can be secured only by unity. This unity will require guidance and control, and these can be afforded only within an empire governed by a single monarch. His office must exist for the sake of mankind, and it is his function, not the ruler himself, which is precious; but this office is supreme in the government of this world.

Dante, however, was confronted by the fact that the Pope, Boniface VIII, was actually claiming both the spiritual and the temporal swords; and, as a Catholic Christian, he could not conceive the subordination of the Church to the secular power, whatever may have been his objection to the contemporary political schemes of the Papacy. He fell into the confusion of dividing the secular and spiritual spheres, arguing that man's nature is twofold, and that humanity has to achieve two ends by different means. Law had been given through the Romans, and the Gospel through the Jews; and Dante conceived that the Emperor was carrying on a traditional function, parallel with that of the Church, but needing no organic relation therewith.

Loyal to the mediæval notion of unity, he misses the spiritual centre and support of that unity as it has been expounded by John of Salisbury and Aquinas. Law and Gospel cannot live together

upon equal terms in one society. Either the Gospel will be transforming Law into grace, shaping and moulding human relations in accordance with the divine standards set forth at Bethlehem and Calvary ; or Law will be dismissing the Gospel as desirable, but impracticable. Nor can a man divide his single soul in a dual allegiance, regarding some actions as beneath the sway of Law, and others as rightly to be governed by the Gospel.

This unresolved dilemma is the very root of the confusion which affects most modern expositions of the Christian ethic. It must be understood that it is impossible to secure human cohesion upon a secular basis, while admitting that man has a transcendent end ; and it is equally impossible to find an enduring equilibrium in social construction by dividing control between the temporary and preparatory dispensation of Law, whether Roman or Jewish, and the Gospel revelation of the Eternal. Dante's faith in the secular power, moreover, ignores the whole history of thought and action. It ignores the theoretic failure of Greek political philosophy and the practical failure of the Roman Empire. It loses sight of the fact that the vital force which secured the resurrection of an unified civilization from the collapse and ruin of the Dark Ages was the Gospel.

This inconsistency, however, was already in process of rectification. Lord Bryce declared that the *De Monarchia* was more an epitaph than a prophecy ; but, indeed, it may truly be said to have been both ; for while it signified the passing of the mediæval dream, it contained elements which were prophetic of the positive changes which were to come, and of

political theories which were to be completely delivered from any lingering allegiance to the Christian Faith.

In the latter half of the thirteenth century there had arisen in France the figure of Pierre du Bois, and he cast a long shadow upon the future. Born in 1255, trained in the law, and entering the royal service, he gained great wealth by pleading causes arising out of clerical property. His real life-work, however, was the defence and advancement of monarchical power and authority in France. Belonging to the new nobility, the order of the *Chevaliers du Roi* which the French kings had instituted to check the intractable nobility of birth, Pierre du Bois gave himself readily to the work of that order. Brentano has said of them that they are the "true creators of the modern State by the extension of royal rights." The conception of the secular State, based upon monarchical authority devoid of any necessary connection with a religious culture and tradition, certainly owes much to the activities of these French intellectuals.

It was due to the *Chevaliers du Roi*, and not least to Pierre du Bois, that the temporal power of the Papacy was challenged; but in this labour they found it convenient to assume that a State had other roots and sanctions than those provided by the Christian Gospel. Could they have foreseen the enormous problems they were reviving, upon a scale greater than had ever before been seen, even their enthusiastic nationalism might have stood appalled, and they might have sought some other, more philosophical approach to the task of correcting the

mistakes of the Church. But the quarrel between the directing ecclesiastical powers and the rising nations reached a point of exasperation and tragedy, eventually shattering the very sense of the brotherhood of Christian men.

The Pope, Boniface VIII, lacking even common prudence, issued the two Bulls, *Clericos Laicos* and *Unam Sanctam*, the former forbidding the payment of taxes to secular rulers, the latter declaring that it was necessary to salvation that every person should be subject to the Pope. Behind these proclamations there may have been a genuine instinct for the unity of Christendom ; but their tone and subject-matter could not fail to increase the prevailing exacerbation. Moreover, that unity was now so illiberally conceived as to weaken men's belief in its desirability. There followed the capture and death of the Pope. In a brief space his successor also was dead, and the next Pope, Bertrand de Got, was the property of France and never saw Italy. Thus did the new nation-state declare its independence of the Papal power. But, as will be seen, it was at the same time declaring its independence of Christendom.

Pierre du Bois, throughout this period, was busily engaged in composing tracts upon the public situation, and his thought is controlled by two doctrines : the need for French dominion in Europe, and the need for abolishing the temporal power of the Church which was, of course, the chief obstacle in the way of that dominion. In his *De Recuperatione Terre Sancte* he does indeed call for peace amongst the nations, but he holds that peace can be obtained only by uniting the world under the authority of the King

of France. That King is to inherit the place of the Pope in terrestrial affairs. A copy of this treatise was sent to Edward I of England, though this copy was carefully deprived of those passages which, in the original, explained how the Pope was to surrender England to the French monarch.

Here, then, is the beginning and original scheme of the modern State. Pierre du Bois apparently knows nothing of the problem which had vexed the Greeks. His naïve self-assurance sees no cause for hesitancy. The basis of his State is the King, who is somehow the source and sanction of his own power. Unlike the Emperor, who is created by the Pope, the King neither knows nor needs any superior authority. What sustains the King in his place seems to be nothing other than the force which he can actually employ. For the commons, they are taught the doctrine of necessary obedience to the powers that be. There is no conception of democracy. There is no suggestion that the office of the ruler exists as a function of the corporate life: the royal power is a fact, and is entirely independent of popular sanctions. There is no thought of the State as the true issue and mode of personal, moral, spiritual life.

Pierre du Bois is eager to show that all true believers form the Church; but he is not clear that all persons form the State and contribute to its authority. He attacks clerical property and urges that the goods of bishops should be entrusted to the care of laymen, who should furnish the ecclesiastics with sufficient allowances; but this democratic gesture fell short of forbidding kings and their satellites to hold as much wealth as they could

snatch. He has some surprisingly modern notions—as if already he foresaw the need of palliatives to soften the injustice and strife which would be born of his own dreams. But at the root of his thought lay the acceptance of material force as the basis of government, the primacy of secular over spiritual sanctions in politics and affairs, and the isolation of the nation as a society more firmly and deeply grounded than the community of the Christian world. And in the long issues of history, it must become manifest that in these respects this French lawyer was a herald, perhaps of modernity, but certainly, in some respects, of disastrous reaction.

The secularist movement found another exponent in Marsilio of Padua. The *Defensor Pacis*, 1324, either entirely, or in large part, his work, further illustrates the conflict between a form of human association shaped by the recognition of a transcendent end, and government founded by force of mundane needs and conditions, and it exhibits no doubt as to where humanity shall find its proper course. The State, evolved from the family, springs from the experience of needs which are common to all men, and from the fact that men in small family groups are not sufficiently powerful to satisfy their material wants. But human perversity prevents co-operation from passing the point of sheer necessity, and constantly tends to hamper it in order to secure private advantage. "Right" and "wrong" are the judgments of reason as to what is beneficial and what injurious to the community, and thus moral judgment is purely natural in its origin and scope. The natural law, however, needs to be enforced, and thus

arises coercive government, the chief task of which is to force men to act in what reason would cause them to understand are their own true interests.

All this, of course, is at variance with the whole mediæval orthodoxy, utterly ignoring the transcendent, spiritual purpose of life and the influence of this purpose in moulding society. Yet the *Defensor Pacis* does allow to religion a certain social function, in a style so modern that it must claim the admiration of many new psychologists. Admitting that coercive government is insufficient to secure the full loyalty of men to a common purpose, it declares that "legislators have, therefore, imagined a God, from whom nothing is concealed and who commands the observance of the laws under penalties." This crude and totally absurd account of the connection between social loyalty and supernatural beliefs is followed later by the surprising dictum that the true conception of priesthood is to be found only in Christianity, and the *Defensor* goes on to explain that as the Christian religion teaches the doctrine of a future life, depending upon the acceptance of doctrines and sacraments, and as salvation is desired by men, the real good of society cannot be secured without religion. The State must therefore maintain the Church.

It will at once be seen that religion is here reduced to the position of handmaid to the cause of material well-being—a proposal which must seem utterly cynical to any man who knows what religion is, and a sure indication that Marsilio's actual view is recorded in his previous assertion that God had been invented by legislators in order to frighten people

into obedience to the government. The *Defensor*, however, discusses the place of the Church a little more closely. It conceives that the task of the priest is merely to give instruction in "salvation" and to administer the sacraments, and it is not supposed that between the work of the priest and the functions of secular government there can be the slightest connection. The priest has simply nothing to do with deciding the mode of economic co-operation. His teaching is not the cause or ground of any particular social order. He is employed by the State to maintain a system of supernatural beliefs which may be, and probably are, entirely false, but are found in effect useful. To such shallow positivism was political philosophy turning, from the lofty themes of Aquinas; and all the tortured reflections of the Greeks were forgotten in a mood of cockney common sense. The strange sodality of man, recognized by primitive pagans as a thing of mystery, to be honoured with solemn rites and protected by stern prohibitions, was now being explained as an association for eating and drinking. The Bride of Christ, the Holy City, had become a tale, told only to keep the vulgar in order.

Yet Marsilio is a democrat of sorts. Since Law is a judgment concerning the advantage of the whole community, the legislator must be either the community, or its *valentior pars*. This term he does not define, but apparently it does not signify any sort of aristocracy, and may perhaps be taken to mean simply, "the majority." The executive exists only to carry out the will of the legislator. The same principle is applied to the Church. As every

Christian is *vir ecclesiasticus*, the clergy have no special right to speak for the Church, and every believer is a member of the Church's legislative authority. It is admitted that the secular authority cannot make a priest, but it has power to determine precisely the occasions of the exercise of the priestly function. The fact is that the *Defensor* attempts to preserve a place for a religion in which the author has no genuine belief, and thus finds extraordinary difficulty in allowing to that religion any organic effect. Confined to the labour of promising invisible rewards or threatening invisible penalties for obedience or disobedience to the demands of the secular State, the Church can have no voice. All believers are the Church, but they are primarily members of a community to which the Church is subservient; and there can be no doubt that the logical conclusion of Marsilio's argument is that the only authority in the Church is the secular legislature.

This ecclesiastical democracy is thus sharply differentiated from the Catholic democracy of Aquinas, and also from that of the English Nonconformists, wherein the primacy of the spiritual order is asserted, and the Church stands upon a foundation independent of the State. We may wonder how an Erastian secularist like Marsilio of Padua would have judged a situation in which the whole body of "believers" had decided definitely against the standards of the secular authority. The answer, however, is obvious. The "believers" must be coerced, if the State be sufficiently strong. If the State be too weak to coerce the Church, the

State must collapse, and with it Marsilio's whole political philosophy.

The complete confusion of thought contained in a scheme which treats society purely as an economic expedient, and yet allows the promulgation of spiritual sanctions which at the same time must not be allowed to interfere with the positive and visible order, needs no comment. But, however confused, this is the conception to which the modern world has given a large, implicit obedience. In whatever sense the *Defensor Pacis* marks progress upon the theories of John of Salisbury and St Thomas Aquinas, it is impossible to find in it any progress in logic. Perhaps it chiefly exhibits a decline of faith in the Christian religion as the revelation of Eternal Reality and the supreme constructive force in human affairs.

The secularist movement, however, was now fairly begun, and it was to receive in England the assistance of a greater man than either Pierre du Bois or Marsilio. There dawned " the Morning Star of the Reformation." Upon this title of John Wycliffe, one may well reflect a little. When it is seen how the whole trend of the time was obscuring both the problem of society and the Christian solution ; and when Wycliffe's actual contribution to the thought of his epoch is gauged, he may possibly appear rather as an Evening Star, or even as the night-wrack, obliterating the brief promise of a day. He saw the Church of his time, wire-pulling and corrupt. The very first result of the assertion of secular nationalism in France had been an increase of acrimony and jealousy between that country and England. The Church having for the moment become the helot

of French policy, the flames of anger against both France and the Church were more easily fanned. The only solution which the strong mind of Wycliffe could propound was the assertion of a like nationalism in England, which should effectively break this country's connection with any spiritual authority beyond its own borders. Within its borders, the State was to be supreme. More logical, and possessing a more virile dialectic, than Marsilio, he declared that the king is God's vicar in his own country and that he is the only source of ecclesiastical authority. He even held that whereas the Church represented only Christ's humanity, the State represented His divinity. And, finally, he disposed of the very notion of a Church by his doctrine that it was the communion of the elect, each member being bound to God by the ties of grace. The communion is invisible and apparently unconscious, for no man may know who is within or without the Church, and any possibility of the constructive activity of the Christian Society in this world is thus ruled out.

It is extremely doubtful whether Wycliffe had any personal religion. His philosophy is secularist. He is nationalist to the core of his thought, and naturalist in the sense that he believed the State to possess full competence of jurisdiction in all things both mundane and spiritual. He is devoid of all perception that the Gospel is a new groundwork of human relations, more fundamental than the earthly societies of men, and essentially bound to construct a society of its own. Recoiling from the contemporary failure of the Church, he sought relief in the utterly impossible dogma of the inspired wisdom of the

human State, ignoring, as all his fellow-secularists did, the problem which had occupied the Greeks, and blind to the fact that no matter how corrupt the Church might be in any age, she was always less corrupt and less cruel than the secular governments.[1]

Wycliffe brought no alleviation to the strife and difficulty which were coming upon the world. The shadows swept down ; and when the new day came, it was empty of a certain vision which had glorified the brief, imperfect mediæval hours. Men had lost faith in the power of Christ to control and order the ways of mankind upon the earth. He was, perhaps, the Saviour of their souls for the world to come ; but His society in this world was shattered. Its authority amongst the nations was in shreds. There arose the giant States, of which He never was the Founder, following roads which could never lead to His kingdom. Each had its Church, subservient to the national cause, offering its prayers for the national flag, adapting its Gospel to fit the national policy and economic.

It may be said that the Lord's servants had served him ill, had misrepresented Him and had failed Him miserably. Be it so. It remains true that Europe, for those servants' sins, turned her back upon any living faith in Christ as the true King of men, the Centre of human cohesion and the only Creator of enduring human order. His day was deferred. There was no abundance of peace, nor was the blood of the poor and needy precious in the eyes of the

[1] Pierre du Bois, Marsilio and Wycliffe are ably treated in the volume edited by Dr Hearnshaw, *Social and Political Ideas of some great Mediæval Thinkers.*

strong. Secular humanism proved a sore bargain for the weak of all nations, for the society of divine brotherhood and pity was now beneath the heel of the society which was formed for the " satisfaction of the natural needs of all men." And this meant, as it always means, the satisfaction of the wants of the proud and powerful. So long as the Church remained, it was always possible that she might be reminded of the Lord whose Bride she declared herself to be. That is to say, the definite existence of an universal society, named of Christ and recognized as the leader of Europe, however fallen away, always, by the very principle of its origin, contained the potency of better things. There was no reason why the States of nature should own any allegiance to Christ. Kings might speak piously, but Pierre du Bois had explained that their office rested in force, and they accepted theories of its divine appointment only when such acceptance was prudent. The doctrine of divine right was more regarded by the sentimental English than by the logical French. At any rate, the chief bulwark of the Prince's power was no longer the Gospel. Had not Marsilio told governors why legislators invented God ? And had not Wycliffe shown them how to deal with Churches ? Their task was to maintain their own thrones, and, if possible, the worldly wealth and glory of their realms, against all comers. And there was no authority left in this world, that could put them to shame.

It is this mood of doubt and negation concerning the spiritual ground and end of life, the mood in which the Middle Ages died, that must be held to

explain the deliberate doctrines of Niccolo Machiavelli. He was not the Man of Sin, the atheist and monster attacked by some of his critics, but probably an honest and serious man, facing an immense problem with inadequate spiritual insight. The desperateness of his mistakes is largely due to the desperateness of the situation to which he addressed his mind. The increasing disruption of mediæval society in Italy, and the slow passing of the sense of supernatural authority—due, no doubt, in no small measure, to the behaviour of the papacy itself—forced upon him the urgent need for order; and, like several of his predecessors in political philosophy, he proposed to show how this could be achieved, without ever plumbing the real depths of the problem. Given a strong and single-minded prince, certain maxims of government would secure the desired end. It is not to be wondered at that many of these maxims appear cynical and immoral; for the task proposed was that of maintaining by external and temporal means the external success of a temporal association of men; and Machiavelli drew his maxims only from his observation of human nature in such external relations.

There is not the slightest suggestion that human society is intended to become a divine order, or that its true structure must be founded upon a supernatural communion. *Il Principe*[1] is pragmatist, opportunist, and utterly worldly. Hence, whatever appeared to serve the immediate and

[1] An account of the chief criticisms of *Il Principe* is given in Villari's *Life and Times of Machiavelli*, Book II. chap. v.

desperate need of society, seemed a worthy instrument—

> It is a general rule that men should be either killed or caressed, because they can take revenge for slight injuries, but cannot for grave, wherefore the injury should be so grave as to be beyond all risk of reprisals.
>
> It behoves every prince, desirous of maintaining his power, to learn how to be dishonest.
>
> Let him be heedless of the risk of infamy for such vices, without which it is hardly possible for him to save his State.
>
> It would be better, were it possible, to be loved and feared at the same time; but as that is not possible, it is better to be feared, when you have to choose the alternative.
>
> Those princes who have achieved great deeds are those who have held good faith of small account.

These and many like *dicta* have drawn upon their author's head great odium. Some of his defenders have argued that for Machiavelli, the prince is no longer a private person, amenable to the rules of morality which apply to individuals, but has become the personification of the State. No doubt this is true, but it exhibits the State as, in Machiavelli's view, without spiritual foundation or ethical meaning, entirely lacking the element of the universal, a mere contrivance for securing material safety. And what may be the ultimate worth of such a contrivance, protected by lies and operating by force and cruelty, it is difficult to see.

If Plato, St Paul, St Thomas Aquinas, are right, it would seem that no State can successfully contract out of the heavenly relation, and therefore Machia-

velli's advice to his prince would secure for that monarch the greater damnation. *Il Principe* assumes that the existence of the State is an end in itself, whereas in truth its mere existence fails to supply it with significance. The moment an association of men seeks to find in itself any meaning above material safety and satisfaction, it discovers the world of ethical and spiritual values wherein the dishonesty and cruelty recommended as means by Machiavelli, are seen to be the most disastrous failure. Nor does it avail aught to say that the maxims of *Il Principe* are, in fact, largely accepted in statecraft: that even one of their chief critics, Frederick the Great, freely adopted them in practice. For it is precisely from the effects of the naturalistic view of human relations, whether in economics or in international affairs, that mankind so sorely needs deliverance at the present time.

Machiavelli, however, was very much the child of his age. The supernatural, the invisible, was fast fading from the eyes of men. The whole tendency of thought and activity was concentrating upon this world as self-contained and sufficiently self-explanatory; and political philosophy, now divorced from the Christian Faith, was adapting its conclusions to the new outlook. Its main path was, for many generations, marked out in England, where events brought into prominence the questions of the State's nature and authority. England was in the forefront of national development, and both her thought and her institutions have influenced the world; but it is of the utmost importance that this influence should be correctly appraised.

Let it be observed that English nationalism speedily went to such extremes that a complete breach was made with the Church of Europe, apart from any Protestant influence, and almost solely in the interests of royal power. It might well have seemed, in the sixteenth century, that in breaking with the Christendom of long tradition, England had found a highway for humanity. She led the van of achievement both in thought and in action. But as the flame of this adventurous mood died down, stark and irksome questions arose for settlement. The new national consciousness had to pass into self-consciousness, and England had to explain to herself what she was, if not an integral part of the body Catholic. And clearly, the first issue to be faced by statesmen and clergy alike, was that of authority. Whence was the co-ordinating and legislative power now derived? Who constituted it, and when, and how?

The first answer provided was the doctrine of the divine right of kings, never more definitely stated than by King James I, and eagerly accepted by a large part of the nation. It was now declared that monarchy was of divine institution, and that the king, the source of law, was answerable only to God. Monarchy was hereditary, and opposition to the hereditary monarch was sin. "The state of monarchy is the supremest thing on earth," said James,[1] "for kings are not only God's lieutenants upon earth, but even by God Himself they are called gods." And he considered it "presumption and high contempt in a subject to dispute what a king

[1] In 1610.

can do, or to say that a king cannot do this or that." [1] The Anglican clergy, upon the whole, lay docile under this doctrine, spoke of the king's "sacred majesty," and in some instances held it sinful to disobey the monarch for any imaginable cause.

It was left to the Puritans and the sects to declare the rights of a spiritual society otherwise based than upon the thrones of kings; and in England the high theme of the *Res publica Christiana* was left to the care of Nonconformists who, rejecting much that was of the true Christian ethos, yet held that Christ could never remain the servant of Cæsar. The conception of the divine right of kingship, an office which, in itself, had no necessary connection with the Gospel as a social force, was rather bound up with that secular account of society to which the Western world was turning, and was no more than a temporary refuge from the pressure of certain grave problems. It was theologically indefensible. Moreover, if James derived his function by the sanctions of the Christian religion, then he was in some sort the servant of the Christian society; but the doctrine of divine right always involved in reality the submission of the Church and the exaltation of the State.

In due time the doctrine perished. But the divinity which passed from the king had, by that time, departed from most institutions. Divinity, indeed, was then generally discounted. The day had come when natural accounts of human life were deemed sufficient; and we have now to see that just as Christianity, in its supernatural solution of the problem of society, had involved democracy and an

[1] Speech in the Star Chamber, 1616.

universal outlook, so the rejection of the supernatural brought about the theoretic abandonment of democracy and of the acknowledgment of wide relations. It is necessary, first of all, to insist upon the growth of secularism in English political thought. This growth began speedily and its logical results were quickly apparent.

Already Bacon had taught that the Churches must be prevented from creating discord among the people, or from opposing the State,[1] and the way was now open for Hobbes and his *Leviathan*, a theory of the State derived from no other source than the author's view of human nature. For him, the association of men is the paradoxical outcome of the fierce and cruel antagonisms of men. "The cause which moves a man to become subject to another is the fear of not otherwise preserving himself." Not that Hobbes thinks the cruel and selfish passions sinful: they are merely natural. It is strange indeed that what is natural should be found intolerable, and the opposition thus discovered in human experience would seem to indicate some more than "natural" principle in operation. But Hobbes sees nothing of this. The state of nature was found to be impossible, and escape must be sought in the surrender of individual right to an authority which might be a single man or a body of men, but must at all events be absolute. Thus, while the sovereign is the result of an agreement, he is under no control. Nothing but his supreme, irresponsible power can constrain the disruptive impulses of men.

This power extends over the institutions of

[1] *Of Unity in Religion.*

religion. Hobbes would allow nothing of authority to a Church. He considered that the secular State had been supreme, amongst the Jews, over the spiritual power; and he argued that the Christian Church had received legal existence only by the act of the Roman Emperor. This meant that Hobbes denied the possibility of any supernatural reorganization of mankind, of any effective redemption which should succeed and annul the natural societies. The latter were to remain permanently, as the social schemes into which all religion must be fitted, or find itself suppressed. Yet there is nothing truly august, there is little moral majesty, in the nature of the State as propounded in the *Leviathan*. Its function is negative. It is not the expression of profound spiritual activities, but a harsh officer whose task is to keep order amongst a blind and foolish race. It bears no relation to deep-lying ethical need. It is born in externals, and therein it abides: of the earth, earthy.

Yet surely, as Samuel Clarke observed in his Boyle Lectures (1704–5), the very essence of a social contract presupposes justice, an ethical value. Morality must be a condition, and not a result, of that contract; and it therefore cannot depend upon the will of the sovereign, who is himself the result of the contract. This is a more searching criticism than the trite observation that "the natural state of man," described by Hobbes, never existed. For in reality it is not necessary to the argument that such a state should have had historical existence; but it is necessary for Hobbes to show that the secular government, a purely mundane institution, is the source of moral

standards. If he can establish that, then there is no moral criterion by which the State can be judged. Samuel Clarke showed that Hobbes' argument contained a patent self-contradiction. And that self-contradiction arose, as it must always arise, from the attempt to discuss human association apart from supernatural implications.

There was an enormous outcry against the *Leviathan*, specially amongst the royalists, the throne and altar men, who deemed themselves defenders of the Church. Such is the short-sightedness of an age. Those who were most incensed against Hobbes were already committed to belief in the divine right of kings, which placed the Church exactly where he would wish to see it. And when the veneer and glamour of pseudo-sanctity had vanished from monarchy, it became clear that Hobbes had but carried to extreme limits the real tendency of the nationalism of the period : had but brought out its underlying secularism. He gave lucidity and hard outline to the nationalism which had moved obscurely and formlessly to produce the national State as the ultimate authority, and the complete environment of the human person. Hobbes was an indication of the current of thought and desire, rather than a creator of systems. But after his work was done, secularism and Erastianism became so firmly rooted in the English mind, that another view of society seemed scarcely possible : and the notion of Christian communion as the supreme, typical and determinative social relation appeared fantastic, unreasonable.

This assumption of secularism is to be found

evident amongst those who assailed the royal prerogative, notwithstanding that they were allied with others, the Puritan sectaries, who had some vision of the Divine Society whereof Christ was Lord. The great lawyers, Coke and Selden, invoked no religious authority against the overweening claims of the crown. For Coke, the common law of the realm was the real monarch. It has been well said that the common law was Coke's religion. Intensely conservative, he must find all his sanctions in precedent; but it was precedent whereof the moral and spiritual meaning was uncriticized, and it was supposed to stand self-sufficient. Not even Parliament might act contrary to common law: its duty was to follow precedent, to state and protect the law, and not to create it. It is remarkable that so lifeless and immobile a conception should have been instrumental in destroying absolute monarchy; but as yet no other authority had been imagined or conceived which could be brought in controversy against the king; and the authority of the Christian Society over Christian men and Christian kings had become utterly forgotten.

Selden was more consciously secularist than Coke. It is not easy to discover precisely what was his philosophy of authority, for he criticized the monarch and the parliamentary leaders with equal freedom. But at all events, he was convinced that the correct attitude of the Church toward the State was one of implicit obedience. Neither Anglican clergy nor Nonconformist ministers escaped the shafts of his irony. He asserted that spiritual jurisdiction did not exist: that the Church could do nothing con-

trary to established law. He would have neither Church nor Scripture accepted as the authority, even in religion, but the State alone.

Even a pure theorist like Harrington, constructing his ideal State,[1] is as secularist as any who were engaged in the rough and tumble of contemporary politics. He enunciated the principle that possession of power within the State must correspond to the distribution of property—a principle destined to become operative in England and for a great while to outweigh the effect of a democratic franchise, as it once outweighed the influence of the crown ; but a principle, nevertheless, incapable of being harmonized with the Gospel. And Harrington quite consistently placed the spiritual interests of his commonwealth under the direction of a national council of religion. There were to be no religious disqualifications, and thus, apparently, no need of any qualifications. The fact is that Harrington, like Selden, had not the faintest notion of religion as a creative and constructive force, transforming the kingdoms of this world into something as yet unrealized—the Kingdom of God. He knew that religion existed, and in some vague way he sympathized with it ; but it was a troublesome factor within the State, and must somehow be kept quiet.

The rude shocks experienced by the royalists, taught the later defenders of monarchy that the sheer assertion of divine right must be replaced by other arguments. Thus, at the Restoration, Filmer [2] contended that monarchy was the development of

[1] *Oceana*, 1656.
[2] *Patriarcha, or the Natural Power of Kings*, 1680.

paternal government, and as the family had grown into the nation, so the patriarch had become a king. Moreover, since paternal authority was a natural right, divinely ordained, kingship was in accordance with the laws of nature and the will of God. The attempt to exhibit Charles II as of the true type of Abraham may be considered bold, if not desperate. But the State must be saved from anarchy, and some show of reason must be made on behalf of the royal prerogative. The king's authority must rest upon something; for, in Filmer's view, the Church as well as the State reposed upon the king, and only monarchy could support religion.

Filmer was answered by the republican, Algernon Sidney,[1] who declared that the absolute power of kings was an usurpation and that all government rests upon consent. But Sidney, it seems, was more completely secularist than any of the Erastians of his time; for while he spoke of upholding the true Protestant religion against corrupt principles, according to Burnet, he disapproved of public worship and disliked the very notion of a Church. The root of the trouble is here exposed. Thinkers had ceased to view Christianity as a divine irruption into this world, destined to draw all the activities of men in new directions, and were coming to regard it as an amiable frame of mind which had its place in society, but must accept the ordinary, natural foundation of law and government devised by the unaided experience of men.

The absolute authority of the secular prince, and the doctrine of his divine right, were largely the

[1] *Discourses concerning Government*, printed posthumously in 1698.

inventions of Protestants, and were made to appear necessary by the emergence of Protestantism. It was ostensibly in the interests of Protestantism that they were eventually dismissed. For James II came to the throne, and defying the Test Act, appointed a Catholic governor of Dover Castle. The Lord Chief Justice held that the laws and their interpretation belonged to the king, and that Parliament had no power to thwart him in his choice of officials. The king was therefore broken by the aristocracy who proceeded to rule England for the next one hundred and fifty years. This was no sudden sport of circumstance, but rather the inevitable development from the secularist and Erastian beginning. The divine right of kings was a superstition. The fatherhood of kings was a fable. The solid fact remained that the real power in a worldly State was economic, and economic power was then chiefly wielded by the landed aristocracy. The king, in future, was the creature of a clique of nobles, the figurehead of the possessing classes.

The vision of the Church as the true heart of society was now obscured. Rather than endure a king whose Catholicism bound him to such a belief, with the permanent possibility that the absolute power bestowed upon monarchy might now become the instrument for destroying that nationalism which had created it, the real rulers of England decided to cast off the last pretence that authority in this country had any need of divine sanction. They turned out the king, with his divine rights. And the dissenting sects, which alone had accepted the heritage of Christendom and believed in the

supremacy of the spiritual society, were now in durance. Their chance of establishing the Divine Society, as they understood it, as fundamental and authoritative in this land, had gone for ever. The modern world had passed its adolescence.

Thus did England turn to a secular conception of the English nation. We have now to see that a distinguishing feature of this entire movement of thought was that it was essentially undemocratic. Mediævalism had by no means overcome the system of privilege and oppression which had descended to it from the collapse of the Roman Empire in the Dark Ages; but we have seen that the characteristic *theory* of society as set forth by the mediæval doctors was indeed democratic. Our present contention is that the *theory* of the secular movement lacked all democratic sympathy. This fact is often concealed by the consideration that the period we have been discussing saw the rebellion of Parliament against the king, and the execution of the "Lord's anointed" at Whitehall. It is with difficulty that the popular mind begins to realize that this quarrel had nothing whatever to do with democracy. It seems easy to understand that the royalists stood for privilege, for arbitrary personal government; and it is therefore supposed that their enemies must have been inspired by some noble dream or high doctrine which would base authority in the will of the people. It is quite true that the parliamentary cause was supported by some who held such faith; but they were to learn that this was not what they had been fighting for. They were taught that they had marched against the king in order to bring

political power into the hands of those who possessed economic power. The *Clarke Papers* [1] have revealed the minds of Ireton and Cromwell, as they faced the democrats of the army—

> That which is most radical and fundamental . . . is this: that those that choose the Representatives for the making of laws by which this State and Kingdom are to be governed, are the persons who, taken together, do comprehend the local interest of this Kingdom; that is, the persons in whom all land lies, and those in Corporations in whom all trading lies. . . . If we shall go to take away this fundamental part of the civil constitution, we shall plainly go to take away all property and interest that any man hath, either in land by inheritance, or in estate by possession, or any thing else.

The Levellers have been objurgated as wild extremists. In truth, the extremity of their demands was manhood suffrage.[2] They desired that Parliament might not legislate in matters of religion. They objected to monopolies and to taxes on food. They were near in spirit, had they but known it, to John of Salisbury and St Thomas Aquinas, but unfortunately they missed the great argument of the democracy of Christ's people, and fell back upon a doctrine of natural rights. Ireton made short work of natural rights, and asserted that men had by nature small heritage other than the air and the highroad. Men must obey the laws, even if they had not agreed to them and had never been consulted con-

[1] *Selections from the Papers of William Clarke*, Camden Society, 1891, vol. I. pp. 302-3.

[2] G. P. Gooch, *Political Thought from Bacon to Halifax* (Home University Library).

cerning their framing. And of the proposal for universal suffrage, it was Cromwell who said : [1]

> The consequences of this rule tend to anarchy. For where is there any bound or limit set if men that have but the interests of breathing shall have voices in elections ?

It is to be observed that these psalm-singing leaders of the Lord's armies against the malignants, who were quite convinced that theirs was the cause of the Almighty, had no thought of Christian fellowship as a revolutionary element in the ordering of human life. For them, as for Hobbes, the secular State was the supreme and determinative society ; and within that association authority is founded, not upon the communion of persons in a divine and supernatural relation, but upon the possession of material wealth. Jesus Christ would have had no vote under the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell.

Even Milton was devoid of belief in popular suffrage and representative government. All his fine declamations concerning liberty cannot conceal the truth that he had no faith in a commonwealth which should include all persons as creative and contributory factors. " Ought the guidance of the republic," he asks, " to be entrusted to persons to whom nobody would entrust the management of their private concerns ? " [2] This seems a hard blow at many of the peers of the realm in most periods ; but it was not so intended. Here again is manifest

[1] *Clarke Papers.* [2] *Defensio Populi Anglicani.*

the failure to realize the place of personality in society, the place which had been so emphatically claimed for it by the great mediæval Christians. The noble and prophetic mind of Baxter saw no further upon this subject. He said that he liked not "the democratic forms," and held that the sovereign is "above all the positive laws of the commonwealth," and that democracy is the worst of all forms of government. He goes on to deride the "ignorant and ungodly rabble . . . fetched from the dung-cart to make our laws." [1]

Those who remained to object to monarchy, after the Restoration, were no more democrats than those who had flung down King Charles. Algernon Sidney, republican though he was, and endeavouring, as he said, to uphold the common rights of mankind, was always mindful of his own caste, and insisted upon the inequalities of human nature. He would not allow to the inferior an equal share in government with the wise. He argued that if divine right ever existed, it was to be found only where one man was better qualified to govern others than they were to govern themselves; and apparently he believed that such a man could be found. It has even been said that he thought himself that man. The first alignment of the political parties showed that Whigs and Tories alike were without a vestige of belief in the possibility of society becoming a fellowship of fundamental equality. And Halifax, the great Trimmer, caring nothing for divine right or the hereditary

[1] *Holy Commonwealth.*

monarchy, but ready to support any king whose policy agreed with his own purely empirical notions, had no faith whatever in the people. "The body of the people," he said, "are generally either so dead that they cannot be moved, or so mad that they cannot be reclaimed."

What was entirely lacking was the sense of society as a spiritual communion, the issue of man's transcendent instincts, wherein the gifts and endowments of some find their only possible meaning in the service of all, not as if they were the property of those individuals in whom they reside, but as belonging to the whole divine corporation. This certainly was proclaimed in the Gospel and demonstrated in the Sacraments of the Church; but few there were who now understood. The Church was safe in the shelter of the State and her clergy were the servants of those whom Cromwell also had served in his day: the people whose hands grasped land and money, and whose interests were now the supreme arbiter of the government of the realm.

The other characteristic of the secularizing of life is to be found in the fading of the idea of an universal fellowship and culture, extending beyond race and nation: the loss of the consciousness of a great, supra-national tradition: the abrogation of a wide loyalty. It is significant that original Protestantism was without missionary enthusiasm. The sects, moreover, forced into existence in days of strife and bewilderment, eventually settled down to the belief that sectarianism was an adequate and proper exposition of the Christian religion. The unity

and universality of the City of God was a thing no longer understood. And if sectarian Christianity lost sight of so great a vision, it is not to be wondered at that political theorists failed to keep alive the ideal of internationalism. If international law can look back to Grotius, it must be remembered that his work was rendered necessary by the collapse of common authority in Europe and the destruction of the unity of Christendom. And the great contemporary of Grotius, our own Bacon, reveals the spirit and tendency of the period—its national pride and jealousy, its failure to grasp the notion of a Catholic community of peoples.

Bacon's conception of foreign policy is rooted and grounded in rivalry and suspicion. A true forerunner of Treitschke and Prussian *real-politik*, our English philosopher rejected the scholastic opinion that war could not justly be made unless some definite injury had been done by a foreign State, and urged that "a just fear of danger is a lawful cause of war." [1] Thus, any ambitious and hectoring sovereign, scenting opposition to his plans, may declare war upon the people he fears; and he is the only judge of the justice of those fears. Mr G. P. Gooch has described Bacon as "totally lacking in the sense that statesmen and rulers owe allegiance to European civilization and to humanity at large." [2] This may be seen, not only in his conception of foreign policy, but in his doctrines concerning international trade. "The increase of any State," he said, "must be upon the foreigner; for whatever is

[1] *Of Empire.*
[2] *Political Thought from Bacon to Halifax*, p. 28.

somewhere gotten is somewhere lost." Could there be a more complete demonstration of the utter loss of the vision of human life as intended to become an organically related whole? Bacon, apparently, had never heard of a body and its members, and seriously believed that one part of mankind could gain, only by injuring another part.

In the seventeenth century, mercantilism was a creed widely received. Its theory was that a country should export the greatest possible amount of its own products and import only those things which were actually necessary and which it could not provide for itself. The mercantilists taught the modern nations that precious gospel which was already accepted in domestic politics, that power goes not with long and honourable traditions, not with dignified service, but with wealth. Thomas Mun,[1] wise in his generation, defended the export of money —a doctrine then regarded as heretical—on the ground that it would ultimately increase the national treasure, and when this was understood, the nations became interested in trade, finance, and the world-market, as they had never previously been. But not co-operatively! Mun taught that foreign trade is the chief source of gain, because, since trade involved the profit of one and the loss of another, domestic trade could bring no gain to the nation as a whole; whereas foreign trade, if successful, meant the despoiling of the foreigner for the advantage of the English people. Fortunately, Providence has or-

[1] *Discourse of Trade from England to the East Indies* and *England's Treasure by Foreign Trade.*

dained otherwise, and Mun's theory of trade is wholly fallacious. But the whole outlook of the time beheld the world beyond the national borders as a hunting-ground in which England might grow rich and therefore powerful; and in other lands, other men held the same view of the relation between their own country and mankind at large.

The way was now fairly opened for the economic enslavement of the poor at home, and for a period of great wars abroad. Since England must thrive in the world-market, she must produce cheaply. And where rivals entered the field against her, she must be prepared to defend her trade with fleets and armies. Thus the whole movement of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with their fierce economic discontents, their top-heavy industrial production and big finance, their bloody and devastating wars across the face of the earth, was directed by the secularization of life, with its undemocratic and nationalist consequences. The spiritual principles of human cohesion, equality, and universality, in a redeemed society, propounded in the New Testament, proclaimed in the very idea of the Church, applied in the theories of St Augustine, John of Salisbury, and St Thomas Aquinas, had been lost. The Christian religion had become misinterpreted as purely an affair of the individual's secret heart, without reference to the practical problem of the ordering of human affairs in the world. The Christian answer to the question of the Greeks was forgotten, and the question itself ignored; and the good Christian behaved himself and supported the structure of a society

which involved the wholesale desecration of life, cruelty to men, women and little children, and set Christians fighting Christians from Calcutta to Quebec.

It is not surprising, after all, that the minds of political thinkers in the eighteenth century should have been occupied chiefly with economics. If the creation of material wealth was to be regarded as the only serious business of mankind, it was much to be desired that teachers should explain how this could be done. Our Lord had once told the secret—Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you : not as a miraculous reward for good behaviour, but as the indefeasible result of obeying the true law of life. But Adam Smith, Bentham, Ricardo, Malthus, scarcely dreamed of regarding economics as an integral part of religion, vitally and logically affected by a man's conscious relation with God. As we have insisted, the Christian unification of life was no longer regarded as a principle capable of present application. For these thinkers, religion stood not at the centre of all things, but was a more or less important adjunct to the solid concerns of the visible world. They lived in the Age of Reason, and no doubt felt some gratitude that they were delivered from the outworn bonds of superstition.

Bentham could make the pleasure of the individual the test of action, implicitly denying the possibility of giving a cup of cold water for Christ's sake, or even for the sake of a thirsty man. It was, in his view, given ultimately for the sake of the giver. Society

was the means of the individual's self-gratification, no matter how finely this might be described. This was a conception very different from the scholastic emphasis upon individual worth; for that had been made in relation with Christian doctrine concerning divine sacrifice, whereas the eighteenth century saw the motive of individual *acquisition*, whether of material goods or moral respectability, erected as the standard of life. This affected all political thought and tainted religion. Now arose the view of religion as a more or less valuable investment. The age of Individualism had arrived.

The gospel of Individualism seemed at first to have some breadth and nobility, because it was concerned to destroy certain existing privileges, and various irksome limitations upon a man's power of self-expression. Had the spiritual sodality of man been understood, Individualism would always have appeared, in principle, simply as disloyalty. But the actual structure of society did not represent or even acknowledge any such corporate spiritual relation. It was an external tie which fettered some for the advantage of others; and the individualists claimed that the fetters should be struck off, in order that all men should be free, one from another and each from all. Thus the battle of unrestrained competition could be fairly fought, and at least the world would have the comfortable assurance that those who gained the greatest prizes were most worthy to receive them. And somehow, by some moral legerdemain, this pursuit by each man of his own happiness, in his own way, was to produce the welfare of all.

Its actual effect was the chaos of hell. Mr and Mrs Hammond [1] have shown how the governing and employing classes adapted the teachings of the economists to their own ends. Adam Smith had argued that the old mercantilist restrictions of international trade by the national governments were really calculated to damage the interests of the nation, hampering natural liberty, limiting the volume of commercial exchange, and impoverishing the producer. This was speedily applied in the field of industrial relations. The attempt to protect any interest, even the interest of human flesh and blood, by legislation, must be forbidden. Whatever was necessary for competitive trade must be allowed, in the hope that in the long run, the advantages of perfect freedom would appear. If in such freedom some men could persuade others (equally free) to work sixteen hours a day for a few shillings weekly wage, it was all in the nature of things. Moreover, the employer, pursuing the dictates of enlightened selfishness, might be trusted not to injure his workmen to such an extent that he injured himself. Thus the prudential morality of the employer, so it was said, was a guarantee of protection for the workers, without the need of cumbrous legislation on their behalf. Human selfishness was the best safeguard of the happiness of its victims!

Again, Malthus had taught that the multiplication of population more rapidly than increase of the means of subsistence involved inevitable poverty and misery for many. This was accepted as a law of

[1] *The Town Labourer*, by J. L. and Barbara Hammond, chap. x.

nature, and any proposal to interfere with its working was regarded as calamitous. It was declared that any attempt to raise the wages of the workers, or to shorten their hours of labour, could only injure those whom it was intending to benefit. The law of supply and demand, it was said, controlled the economic process, and nothing could advantageously intercept its operation.

The whole iniquity of this attitude is not to be charged against the political economists, but such were the conclusions generally drawn from their teachings. These conclusions were inhuman and so far removed from the spirit of the Christian Faith, that they might have been reached in total ignorance of the New Testament. And when the natural sense of justice had been shocked by their practical effects into provoking a reaction of reform and deliverance, a reaction which fought its way through the politics of the nineteenth century, a fresh danger arose. This danger increasingly troubles and disturbs the world, is a threatening rival of armed nationalism, but brings an equal menace. It lies at the centre of our present confusion. Individualism has been partially rectified by the adoption of association as a principle; but association is now founded merely upon immediate and superficial identity of economic interests. Beyond the borders of that material community there is strife as bitter as ever. The class war has been declared, and combinations of capital and labour, constantly engaged in a guerilla campaign which may at any time develop into a pitched battle, also, from time to time, indulge in the practice of holding society to

ransom for their own benefit. Between the rivalries of the nations upon one hand and the hostility of the classes upon the other, the modern secular society seems often in danger of being destroyed.

Political theory in the nineteenth century did nothing to solve the problem. Spencer and the evolutionists, Green and the Hegelian idealists, the contemporary biological or psychological theorists, have been powerless to influence the main situation. What is needed is a radical and revolutionary conversion of motive, a thoroughly revised estimate of the purpose of life, a drastically changed conception of human relations; and there is no such salvation proposed from any quarter, other than the vision of the Christian Republic, the hope of men finding themselves afresh in a spiritual association, pursuing transcendent purposes, and thus employing the material means of life co-operatively—because all alike are concerned to achieve an end which is one, and unites all its servants: which is eternal, and rightly evaluates material means because it transcends them. But this is a task for religion; and such is the condition of religion, so readily has it allowed itself to be conditioned by the secular aims of the modern world, that it is often regarded as the bulwark of that secular society which it came to vanquish. It has therefore to be shown what are the political implications of the Christian Faith: what are the nature and function of the Christian society. Christian dogma must be set in opposition to those secular assumptions which now govern human relations. The unity and supremacy of the super-

natural bond must be made manifest above all the interests and forces which divide the Church and thus obscure its significance. The divine criterion of life must be sharply opposed to the judgments of unredeemed nature. The truths of conversion and grace must be demonstrated as applicable to the whole human organization.

This is the complex, herculean task awaiting Christian men in this critical age of the world's history. Yet, however complex in some respects, the task is simple in essence, and not difficult for any faithful heart to understand; for it is nothing other than the declaration of the Lordship of Christ, and the acceptance of His fellowship as the true, deathless society. The remaining chapters of this book will discuss various aspects of the problem, in the belief that the Christian Faith, being the revelation of the nature of ultimate Reality, carries within itself an impetus sufficient for the transformation of the soul and society. Upon all sides men are anticipating changes and dimly perceiving that the "modern world" is growing old; but what thrilling and sustaining impulse shall create the world anew, draw nations and classes from their futile antagonisms, dispel their illusions and consolidate their errant motives in one controlling order of spiritual dignity—this they do not see. Yet a modern poet has told them:

> A new world did Columbus find?
> Ah! 'tis not so *that* world is found;
> God's golden harvest sheaves who bind
> Are tillers of another ground.

SECULARISM

No new world like the old we need;
One thing sufficeth—one alone,
A garnered world-harvest from seed
The wounded Hands of Christ have sown.

One Sign alone is love-designed,
God's Evergreen, the Eternal Rood;
Happy the home-seekers who find
Its meaning plain—*a world renewed!*[1]

[1] Alfred Gurney, *The New World* in *The Oxford Book of English Mystical Verse.*

V

PERSONALITY AND SOCIETY

One of the first of the capital effects of the secular movement was to call in question the place and value of personality. The individualists who defended the freedom of men from the interference of the State pursued this course not from any faith in the transcendent significance of the individual, for they generally were without any notion of transcendent values. Spencer, their great spokesman in the nineteenth century, by declaring that the Ultimate was unknowable, asserted man's fundamental ignorance of the meaning of the State, the individual, and everything else. No one, indeed, can pretend that Individualism was born in an age of faith, or possessed any profound respect for the soul as a precious and immortal mystery. True, the genius of the industrial revolution was apt to praise individual initiative—" tact, push and principle," though not seldom the " principle " was more obscure than the other high virtues mentioned. But it praised these things almost as one admires the impersonal forces of nature. It could not properly appreciate them as expressions of personality, because, in the economic hurly-burly of those times, their very existence involved the oppression and suffering of

countless numbers of persons. Personality, therefore, presumably common to successful and unsuccessful alike, could not possibly be a sacred or supremely valuable thing in itself.

Indeed, it was not to be expected that, in a world which had turned with tremendous energy to the exploitation of the visible and had agreed to explain human association in terms of material interest, any doctrine of the spiritual nature of man would receive much practical consideration. Thus it came about that the poor were crushed down and insulted until the story of their wrongs has become a woeful epic. The power and prowess of the industrial leaders could win respect because they produced wealth. Manhood was slighted because, economically considered, it was cheap. It was herded in the rising towns, those vast, featureless phenomena, sprawling obscenely across already blackened and poisoned country. It was regimented in mills and mines and factories, driven and browbeaten, deliberately reduced to the most wretched poverty in which human life was capable of existing, and forbidden, under stringent penalties, the slightest gesture of self-defence.

There came at length a reaction, a movement of sheer, instinctive protest upon the part of the outraged human spirit, which through much storm and stress did succeed in restoring some semblance of human decency to the industrial enterprise. The energy of reform which appeared in the first half of the nineteenth century may not have been allied with a profound philosophy of life, but it was a sign that man cannot successfully and permanently deny

his own divine calling; and perhaps it proved, too, that some aspects of the Gospel were not completely forgotten.

It happened, however, that while humanitarians were attempting to mitigate the worst effects of secularism, other influences were arising to repeat, in other ways, the negation of personal values. Science was now revealing, more and more, the vastness of the universe, the immensity of the geological ages, the littleness of mankind. Darwin and Wallace propounded the theory of evolution by natural selection, which seemed not only to cast doubt upon man's unique spiritual significance by linking him with the brute creation, but to prove that the human person was at the mercy of the natural laws and impersonal forces which had moulded him and might cast him aside as useless. All men suddenly became dwarfs. Personality was no longer the mirror of God. The joy of the saints, the dignity of kings, the valour of heroes, shrank into insignificance. Huge, impersonal forces were working to unknown issues: the existence of the human species was apparently but a stage in some incomprehensible process.

The first effect of evolutionary doctrine upon many people was in the direction of pessimism and despair, and no doubt this attitude of mind caused some disparagement of the effort toward social reform. Moreover, the ambiguous phrase, "the survival of the fittest," was as freely quoted as some of the conclusions of Adam Smith had previously been. But the movement of the workers was now

too strong, their perception of their own interests too sure, to be easily arrested by cosmic theories. Their cause was aided by the development of Socialism which was able to make some use of evolutionary doctrine for its own ends. But Socialism was not directly founded upon any sense of the value of personality. Its main argument might be based upon purely naturalistic premisses. Marx not only regarded mankind's central interest as economic, but treated economics as controlled by indefeasible natural law. It is because neither modern Capitalism nor modern Socialism is really built upon a faith in the infinite value of the soul, that by neither alternative can the world hope to find its peace. For the individual's view of society and society's view of the individual alike need to be dominated by some definite belief concerning the relation of both the soul and society to Ultimate Reality. This requires some knowledge of that Reality; but upon that subject modern thought has produced very little reassurance.

During the nineteenth century, quite apart from the desolating influences of agnosticism and naturalism (which scarcely merit the title of philosophies), the main philosophical tendencies were not in the direction of restoring personality to the place it had occupied in the doctrines of the schoolmen. Philosophy, emancipated from any sort of allegiance to the Christian revelation, produced a brilliant succession of schools and theories which at the present time seem to some thinkers to have led nowhither. Chiefly, perhaps, it attempted to interpret Ultimate

Reality either as Thought, or as Will. At first sight either of these conceptions might seem likely to establish the soul of man as of high significance in the universe and as the enduring crown of creation; and no doubt adherents of Idealism in particular have supposed that in their philosophy the worth of the individual was finally vindicated. But the whole movement, which began with Descartes, had for its result the conception of human consciousness as a phase or moment of the Absolute Thought which was the sole reality, and this obviously left human individuality in an insecure position, a fleeting and fading mode of the indivisible Thought which alone can give to it the semblance of reality. On the other hand, the philosophies of Will eventually reached the "life force," "superman," and all that stock of notions which reduces man to the level of an experiment that may at any moment be abandoned or improved upon. And Pragmatism, which seemed to exalt humanity to the seats of the gods, left everything else unexplained, for the simple reason that the new god could not explain himself. He might be the measure of all things; but he now possessed no standard by which his own value could be assessed.

Thus it may be seen that the entire movement of modern secularism has failed to provide human personality with any trustworthy sanctions. And this implies that it is incapable of defending actual persons, as such, from the pressure of a mechanical civilization. It has not within it the real stuff of revolution, for it cannot proclaim the ineffable worth

of a man, and its only substitute for such firm assurance is sentimentalism. The inevitable result of this failure must assuredly be a widespread pessimism, no matter how many attempts be made to escape it. Man is such a creature as cannot indefinitely continue to labour and to suffer, unless he can somehow satisfy himself that this tragi-comedy of his existence is appreciated at the heart of the universe. Not even the amazing achievements of the present age in scientific discovery and invention will ever reconcile him to a world in which he believes himself to be inevitably debarred from intelligible relations with the creative and sustaining cause of his life; and for anything he knows, from the results of secular philosophy, his science may be only preparing the way for issues he cannot apprehend and in which he can have no part or lot.

The doctrine of the Personality of God is therefore necessary for man's health and well-being. That is to say, man requires that the basal elements of his nature shall be regarded as so akin to the eternal and ultimate Reality, that between him and God there may be conscious communion and genuine co-operation. He needs to persuade himself that his soul is no mere peripheral product in the universe, but is intended to apprehend in some measure the meaning of creation, and in some degree to share the divine counsels and purpose.

The obvious and very shallow objection to this demand is that it is anthropomorphic. But a brief examination of the alternatives speedily disposes of that ground of criticism. Assuming some creative or

sustaining power as the source of the universe, we are compelled to say that this power must be either personal or impersonal. If it be impersonal, it must be so either because it is infra-personal or because it is supra-personal: that is to say, it must be some force, or permanent relation of forces, such as we discern in nature; or it must be so completely transcendent that no powers or categories of personality can apprehend it. Now, an impersonal force, or relation of forces, such as we can know and measure, cannot possibly be conceived as producing personality. But neither could a transcendent Power create personality, which is conscious and reflective, without in some measure revealing Itself. Agnosticism imagined that the universe could exist as an effect, without revealing to human consciousness anything of the nature of its cause—a position now generally abandoned. And the main streams of modern speculation which identified the Ultimate with Thought or Will, shunning the "anthropomorphic" tendencies of religion and regarding the Christian emphasis upon personality with lofty superiority, were themselves really abstracting from personality one element or another, thought or will, and hypostasizing it.

The Christian Faith, at all events, has always boldly declared the Personality of God, meaning that although in the divine nature thought, will and feeling are essentially without obstruction or limit from without or within, they are of like nature with human thought, feeling and will, finite though these certainly are. This is an assertion of the innate

dignity of man. Under the influence of Christian teaching, man came to believe himself to be somehow of central significance in the universe ; and this faith was often symbolized in crude cosmologies. The collapse of the cosmologies seemed at first to involve the destruction of the Faith ; but it does nothing of the sort. What is meant by the central significance of man is that although he live but a brief, mortal span upon a small, suburban planet, his true ends have a meaning which is important for God : that his being is a concern in which God has interest : that he is capable of divine fellowship and is intended to share the divine purpose and to co-operate in its realization. Upon this view, the true triumph of a human soul is rewarded by the appreciation of its divine Fellow-Worker : "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." And the tragedy of man's disloyalty is so immense, that angels may well rejoice over one sinner that repenteth.

Such a faith must obviously exert an enormous effect upon man's estimate of himself, clothing his acts with high dignity, making of his citizenship, his daily toil, his domestic intimacies, a story of deep meaning and wide import. And thus also his sin becomes no mere episode of growth, but a calamity large enough to cast a shadow upon the sky and to spoil the common earth. Upon the whole, there cannot be the slightest doubt that belief in the Personality of God has vastly ennobled and elevated human life, making it in some sort kingly, even amidst poverty and distress. But unless all the main implications of personality are understood, there is

danger, too, in this exaltation of the human person. Without proper safeguards it may lead to a proud and self-sufficient religious individualism whereof the mask may be humility, but the real substance is a sense of indifference, or even of superiority, to others; or the opinion that other persons, besides God, are not necessary to the self. This attitude, whatever be the style of its religious address, finds no difficulty or paradox in self-assertion in this world, can loudly emphasize a person's rights, and may be almost devoid of social conscience. England has seen so much of such divine-human fellowship, the partnership of one lonely man with his own lonely God, that there is a common superstition that this is the Christian religion.

The fallacy of this religious individualism which can disconnect piety from all sense of social obligation and can find in Christian doctrine little more than a cause of self-glorification, is complex. In the first place, it is forgotten that whatever may be the possibility of the individual's relation with God, he certainly could not exist apart from relation with other human beings. He is born of the race, and the powers and needs of his nature bind him to his fellow-men for better or worse. Consequently, no religious expression which omits to relate him to God, not merely as a unit of consciousness and will, but as a member of society, can set forth the complete spiritual truth about personality. For, as Mr F. H. Bradley has observed, "Society without the individual is not more an abstraction than the individual without society."

Now, the Christian Faith reinforces this consideration with the most profound and daring sanction, declaring that even within the Being of God, personality exists only in social relation. The doctrine of the Holy Trinity is far from being a purely academic construction without meaning for practical affairs. It lies at the roots of the Christian ethic. It signifies that God is both personal and social, both completely, both at once: that within His infinite Being, the relation of love is for ever adequately sustained. This means that in dealing with the Ultimate, we are confronting not a solitary unity, but a perfection of relations, and a cohesion which is indissoluble but whereof the components are Persons. Such a conception is philosophically defensible, since it is difficult to see how a world of relations can arise from an undifferentiated unity whose Being contains no possibility of relations. But Professor Clement Webb, in his Gifford Lectures, *God and Personality*,[1] has shown how the Trinitarian conclusion logically follows from personal religious experience. He argues that if we accept the possibility of personal communion with God, we must suppose that personal communion is also a fact, and a permanent fact, of the divine life, involving personal distinction within the Deity. This seems to follow, indeed, unless we are to suppose that fellowship was an unprecedented experience for God Himself, when He first entered into communion with His creatures. Such a supposition would still leave the problem of

[1] Pages 272 ff.

how, from a solitary unity, the possibility of fellowship had arisen, and the only possible answer would be that creation was due to some felt lack in God: that He needed communion, and must seek it in creation. But this answer surrenders the whole theistic position, since it admits the imperfection of God. If God has any need, it must be because there is some fact or potentiality existing beyond and outside of Himself—and therefore He is not the Creator of all things, since, *ex hypothesi*, He could not have created a fact or potentiality whereof the very principle is lacking in Himself.

The Christian revelation, however, declares that God is love: and this not only implies that He contains within Himself the perfection of social relation, but announces the nature and quality of that relation. It declares that the perfection of fellowship within the Godhead is a communion of unrestrained, reciprocal self-giving. God is love, unfettered, absolute, for otherwise He could not be perfectly personal and perfectly social. And thus arises a revolutionary criterion of the function of personality within human society: a conception and standard of personal relations utterly subversive of the ordinary standards of secular societies and of the wisest human laws. It is the criterion of the Gospel. Perhaps the fullest measure of the contrast may be seen, when we recall the fact that the noblest aim of human legislation has been to establish the "rights" of personality, as distinct from the rights of rank or property. The Christian conception of God declares that the whole notion of "rights" is incapable

of providing either personality or society with an adequate mode, and must be transcended within the divine-human society.

The secular movement is sometimes glorified as having been the means of announcing "the rights of man," in contrast with the hide-bound systems which it displaced; but close discrimination is needed before a just judgment upon this question can be reached. We have seen that in practice, men of action like Cromwell and Ireton were disposed to pay but small respect to any doctrine of natural rights. Hobbes, too, conceived that whatever natural rights had resided in the individual in the state of nature, had been abrogated by the contract whereby a single and absolute authority had been constituted. In the eighteenth century, however, both in America and in France, there were movements against the centralized and absolute monarchical State, and in both countries appeal was made to the doctrine of the rights of man as axiomatic. In England the doctrine was supported by Tom Paine and Godwin. In reality, a secular account of man's life became the ground both of the denial and of the assertion of "rights," because it was the source both of the absolute conception of the nation-state, and of individualism.

Bentham, of course, derided the notion of natural rights, which he called "nonsense upon stilts." His position was that although in a rational order every inequality between man and man should be either justified or destroyed, and that no merely arbitrary differences should be allowed to exist, this

admission must not be taken for a declaration that there is actually an equality between all men, such as would countenance an assertion of *à priori* equality of rights. According to Bentham, human rights are not natural: that is to say, they do not derive from any source beyond the positive and particular society in which the man exists, but are bestowed upon him only by that society's laws. And they are given only for the sake of utility, because the admission of certain rights tends to produce the greatest happiness of the greatest number.

But the secular conflict between the man and the State was not to be thus easily settled. It was the discovery of the Greeks, and it is our whole contention, that upon the natural plane this antithesis can never be resolved. It was only to be expected that the movement, which had begun by placing society upon natural foundations, should discover the individual declaring that the sanctions of his needs and desires were just as valid as the sanctions of social restraint. Upon the secular view of human life, there can be no end to this quarrel. Individualism was bound to return as a reaction against absolutism. It flourished with the industrial revolution, and in the nineteenth century found a famous spokesman in Herbert Spencer. But nothing could be more confused than Spencer's attempt to defend individual rights as innate and inalienable.

According to him, rights are "inherent properties" of a man's constitution, and logically pre-social, so that no social structure can ever abrogate them. Thus, while there can be no private right in

land, because this would necessarily deny the rights of some, there must be private rights in the products of the land, because these have been gained by the exercise of the individual's own labour.[1] This has a superficial appearance of being logical, so far as it goes. But the question arises as to how this man acquired the right to labour upon this piece of land; and Spencer returns the surprising reply that he obtained the consent of the community. Thus his "inherent" and "pre-social" private right to enjoy the results of his labour, does, in the last resort, depend upon the consent of society.

In *The Man Versus the State*, Spencer argued that the acts necessary for maintaining the life of the individual are right; and that the liberty required for the performance of those acts is "a right." Huxley remarked that upon this ground tigers possess rights; but Spencer proceeded to explain that the difference between the rights of a man and the rights of a tiger is constituted by the existence of other men. A man must claim no rights which limit the rights of others. But why? Where, upon this view of pre-social rights, resides the criterion by which may be decided what acts are necessary for maintaining the life of any individual? It is a commonplace of ethical philosophy that rights so conceived may clash. What guarantee is there, in Spencer's conception of the universe, that there is always scope for the maintaining of the life of the individual, side by side with others possessed of equal rights to

[1] *Social Statics.*

maintain themselves? And, if under no stress of circumstance may a man do anything to limit the rights of others, how is the rivalry of rights to be composed? When danger threatens and only some may escape: or when food is scarce and it is not possible for all to be maintained? Apparently recourse must then be had, either to the *Leviathan* of Hobbes, and such absolute government as Spencer loathed, or to the method of the crew of the *Nancy Bell*, which he does not discuss.

Now, the whole conception of rights as determining human association, whether they be regarded as pre-social and limiting the corporate authority, or as being called into existence only by law and thus expressing the corporate authority, is derived from an external view of human association. Wherever and however the rights of a person are defined, they are defined as *against* other persons, or as *against* society. There is no relief from this conclusion in the consideration that rights involve duties, for duties and rights lie both within the same sphere. It is a sphere in which neither personality nor society is fully realized: in which a man is still, in some sort, a stranger to his fellows, and in which both personality and society remain upon the natural plane. Personality does not find itself in and through society, nor is there any inner cohesion, any identity of ideal end, amongst men, such as may be regarded as the true ground of their communion. The Idealists perceived this, and strove to give a finer ethical and spiritual interpretation to the conception of rights than it had yet received. But

even in the conclusions of so noble a thinker as T. H. Green,[1] it is possible to find, under this head, shortcomings and contradictions.

Green argued that self-consciousness postulates liberty, because, since the self must will those ideals with which it has identified itself in motive, it must claim the power to realize them, or suffer an inner frustration. The self, however, is conscious of other selves; and it wills not only its own good, but its own good in relation to those other selves. That is to say, it wills the good of society. Thus, according to Green, rights are simply the claim of the individual to pursue the ideal for himself and for all. This view of rights appears very promising, until the question is asked, what are the "ideal objects" of pursuit? For if the ideal be squared with the Christian revelation, the individual cannot need to make any sort of *claim* upon anyone for freedom in the pursuit of it. It is not by demanding the non-interference of others, it is not by claiming that there must be no persecution, that the Christian ideal is attained. Rather, it can be reached only through the acceptance of opposition.

Our Lord's commands are not of such nature that we require any man's recognition of our right to obey them; and we shall suffer no frustration of spirit if men declare that we must not obey them, for such opposition affords us the most signal opportunity of obedience.

[1] *Principles of Political Obligation* and *Liberal Legislation and Freedom of Contract.*

> But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you.
>
> Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.
>
> And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek, offer also the other: and him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also.
>
> Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again. (St Luke vi. 27-30.)
>
> Resist not evil . . . And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. (Matt. v. 39, 41.)
>
> Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?
>
> Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven. (Matt. xviii. 21, 22.)

This attitude is much more logical than Green's. For when the "ideal object" of the individual far surpasses the contemporary standards of society, upon what ground is it possible to *demand* that freedom to pursue the ideal shall be granted? To what authority can any appeal be made? And if the ideal include meekness, long-suffering, forgiveness, the Cross, where is the cogency of a demand for "freedom" to seek these things? And even if freedom from constraints could secure the individual in his pursuit of his "ideal object," how could it be maintained, the risk of contradiction and opposition being done away?

Green holds that rights, as he conceives them, have first to be recognized by the moral consciousness, and that eventually they become embodied in "law," meaning thereby the law of the secular society with its penalties, its restraints, and its final sanction of force. And this is sufficient proof that he was entangled with two disparate sets of values and modes of life. Setting out to show that rights might be regarded as one aspect of the individual's pursuit of a common, ideal good, he comes at length to rely upon force for the preservation of the person in the service of the ideal. And the reason is that he does not explicate the ideal. He is not sufficiently in harmony with the Christian declaration that upon the throne of the universe is the Wounded Lamb, and that in the last resort, sacrificial suffering is the root of authority. Resort to force can never be proposed by the Christian society as a final method of securing its ends; for coercion does simply nothing to secure the ideal end, because it can never bring about cohesion of spirit between men. Indeed, the spiritual kingdom which is sought under the protection of all kinds of such safeguards rapidly fades into an ideal of smug respectability and comfort, which, as we see in the modern world, may be but one of the provinces of hell. If force be used at all, it must be in the cause, not of rights, but of love, utterly without vindictiveness and seeking the good of the person restrained. But to secure that good, love must abrogate force as speedily as possible, for in physical restraint spiritual relations are subjugated. Thus it is impossible, from the Christian

standpoint, to regard "the right to pursue the ideal" as ever satisfactorily and permanently defended by force, for the reason that the Christian really needs no "right" to pursue his ideal. We are compelled to conclude that Green was wavering between two conceptions: between the views of human association as, on the one hand primarily an inner, spiritual cohesion, and on the other as an external relation of individual life incapable of more than partial consolidation.

It is not, then, by the definition and maintenance of rights that the true relation of personality and society may be achieved. Emphasis upon rights, even when it is held that they derive only from the State, seems upon the whole to make for a conception of the State as merely balancing and adjusting the conflicting claims of individuals. And the main stream of thought in the modern world may certainly be said to have moved away from Herbert Spencer, and to have declared for the determinative right of the community. Modern Socialism, of course, carries this tendency to its logical issue. It makes the claim, not only that it would so employ the right of the community that a just distribution of wealth would be ensured, but that it would find the basis of the State's authority in the will of the whole people. It thus offers itself as the only true defence of the individual. But although economic collectivism in various forms has won the sympathy of considerable numbers of religious men, and has sometimes produced propaganda of Christian Socialism, it must not be forgotten that in its

genesis and central current, Socialism, as we have already noted, is as secular as Capitalism, and arises in an economic interpretation of human life. It appeals to no ultimate and transcendent dogma concerning man's spiritual end. The State, though it is viewed as comprising the whole body of persons as composing its authority, is first and foremost an association for economic ends. Obviously, such an organization could not permanently retain in reality the character of a democracy, though formally it might appear to do so. If you assert that men, so far as you are concerned with them, are fundamentally economic units, you must not complain if they fail to rise above the economic motive; and the supposition that the economic motive will suffice to preserve the strong in equality with the weak must be classed with the bright but sentimental optimism sometimes found in the very naïve.

In overlooking the necessity of an inner, spiritual cohesion, the collectivist movement has dispensed with the only possibility of securing its own economic aims. The only practicable commune will be that which is the outcome of a common spiritual experience: which itself is a cohesion whereof the centre and stay is a religion—a consciously shared relation with Ultimate Reality. The naked and forlorn cosmopolitanism of international Socialism is a poor substitute for this, and cannot succeed in overcoming the differences of race, tradition and interest which divide the modern world.

Even if it were possible so to consolidate a community by purely economic interest, as Socialism

supposes, there would be no guarantee that personality was essentially more honoured than under individualist and capitalist forms. So long as the spirit of man is not won to association, his outward co-operation must ultimately be secured by compulsion, whether economic or of physical violence. It is a magnificent proposal that men shall work for the good of society, and that society shall justly apportion the products of their labour; but it is a proposal of religion, and no economic constitution can ever accomplish it—for upon the plane of material interests, men remain only in external relations. Consequently, upon the first suggestion of disagreement between the person and the State, resort must be had to some kind of forceful constraint to preserve solidarity. And there can be no doubt that a Socialist State might be as cruel to prophets as to profiteers, as disastrous to saviours as to shirkers. Its law of association, grounded amongst things visible, might bring it into conflict with any who declared themselves urged by an experience of the Invisible. The Socialist State might conceivably decide that the Church was a disorderly anomaly. It might possibly announce that marriage was an effete form of contract. It might very easily demand of its citizens military service in a war for economic advantage. There is no economic reason why it should not do any of these things.

Of course, thousands of Socialists would set their faces earnestly against such proposals or demands; but that is because they do not actually believe that the economic motive is the first and final foundation

of human co-operation. At the back of their minds, they are seeking a city not made with hands, and they believe in the Kingdom of God. But the Kingdom of God was inaugurated in this world by the historical act of Incarnation, by the Christian revelation and the Christian society ; and it is these which must become fundamental in the re-ordering of life. It is the Christian experience and Christian fellowship which must provide the determinative social tie. Only in such a fellowship can personality find its due place and realize its true nature. Men must accept the strange paradox that the divine society demands of them a stricter bondage than the Socialist State requires. It demands that they shall lose their life to its very core and in so doing keep it unto life eternal : that they shall surrender the last shred of their freedom, that they may be free indeed.

Thus the Christian conception requires that social order shall be constructed, not upon rights, but upon willing love ; and that co-operation shall be given in economic tasks because self-giving is of the character of God and thus the only true law of personal and social life. Mutual self-giving is the only secure tie between persons. Christian dogma asserts that it exists within the personal-social Being of the Deity, and if this be accepted, the result must be an entirely revolutionary attitude toward the accepted social doctrines of this world. The effect must fall upon the relations of men in industry and commerce, and upon the relations of classes and nations. And the Church, which calls men to God,

is bound to assert that by its own members the character of the divine life must be regarded as providing the principle of human association and intercourse in every sphere.

The attitude thus indicated toward those whose limitations appear to make such social relations impossible for them—the backward races, the "unemployables" of our city slums, those of criminal tendency, the poor whose souls have been crushed within them and the unfortunate rich who have been smothered by their own possessions—is not difficult to determine. We have insisted that the genius of the Christian Faith is for universality. It is, above all others, the missionary religion. And the Christian Society will engage in one enormous labour of sacrifice and compassion for the conversion and uplifting of all men, believing that all men are potentially citizens of the heavenly city. It can never endure the existence of ranks of living men who are in human society but not of it: its instruments, like beasts of burden. It can never be content to behold "the lesser breeds without the law." Those differences amongst men which enrich the complex of life, it can employ for the common good; but it will always assert that no differences in human nature can constitute grounds of privilege, and that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female.

Too often, however, it seems that in the very act of relating the individual to an immortal destiny, religion seems to draw his attention from the needs

of mundane society. It seems, to many minds, that religion does but carry the motive of self-concern to issues beyond this world. No Church has stood very well with modern democrats and deliverers! Early in the nineteenth century, the Methodists were suspect by those who were defying the iniquitous combination laws. Most of the actual charges levelled against them—charges of espionage and complicity with the masters—were no doubt false; but there stands the address of the Methodist Conference (Bristol, 1819), calling upon the Methodist people to dissociate themselves from political agitation and, in the prevailing economic distress, to satisfy themselves with heavenly comfort; and never a word was said against the vile system which was enslaving the workers of England. Indeed, the address was sent by a Wesleyan official to the Home Office, presumably as proof that the Methodists were well content with the ordering of society. If that was the intention, it was a betrayal of John Wesley, who condemned the luxury of the rich, and said, concerning unfair methods of gaining wealth: "None can gain by swallowing up his neighbour's substance, without gaining the damnation of hell." But by the year 1819, not a few Methodists were beginning to grow rich; and in the twentieth century this form of personal religion has established a reputation for docility and respectability—a fate which has overtaken all the Nonconformist sects.

During the industrial revolution, however, Methodism in particular made great strides if only

because it did give to common men some notion that they were more than mere tools. Nonconformity in general gave some recognition to personality, in its democratic forms of Church government, whereas in the Church of England, as Mr Hammond has said, the poor man's place was "on a rude bench or mat, listening to sermons on the importance of the subordination of the lower classes to the grand family worshipping amid the spacious cushions of the squire's pew."[1] As for the Church of Rome, the middle of the nineteenth century saw her so utterly divorced from all sympathy with the cause of liberty and human fellowship that the Italian *Risorgimento* regarded her frankly as an enemy, and Garibaldi's soldiers are said to have trodden underfoot the Blessed Sacrament as a sign of their repudiation of her yoke. Nor even to-day, in spite of the Roman "Rerum Novarum," and the English "Copec," can it be said that the Churches are regarded as revolutionary in their view of the social implications of their Faith. They do not clearly enunciate the effects of the redemption of a person, and are too willing to allow the conclusion that those effects must cause no disturbance in the social order.

This, however, is no true setting forth of the meaning of a Church. The divine fellowship must control all the relations of its members, or must stultify itself; and the Church cannot claim to reveal the Blessed Trinity as the true ground of personal-

[1] *The Town Labourer*, chap. xiii.

social life, and permit her people to be perpetually organized in a secular system which denies the Christian principle. Either she must seek again, in some way, to realize her centricity and leadership in a society one and Catholic, or she must be content to suffer an ever-declining significance amongst the governing forces of the modern world.

It may be objected, however, that this whole argument proceeds upon a fallacy: it may be urged that the dogma of the divine nature, no matter how unreservedly accepted, cannot become determinative of human relations, for the simple reason that human personality is finite—man is not God, and the ways of God are not for him. To this objection there are two main replies. In the first place, if the principle of human fellowship be more than a secular motive: if it be spiritual and transcendent, it must, in all Christian philosophy, be related to what is known of God, and determined by our belief concerning the divine nature. "Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect" is a command consonant with all ethical instinct, which is bound to perceive the authority of the ideal, no matter how appallingly difficult may be its realization. Hence it is impossible for the Christian Society to remain content with human habits and standards, even though they are of deep root. It has always been a temptation of the Church to temporize and make terms with difficulties. Sometimes she has done so with wise and honourable intention, meaning to overcome by slow influence what apparently cannot be banished in a moment. But not seldom

she has sunk into slothful acquiescence in standards of conduct which are patently opposed to the very elements of Christian doctrine and impossible to reconcile with Christian fellowship. Her failure to declare against war, and her long assumption that the modern economic system is an unalterable law of nature, are examples of this; and they spring from the easy-going, unheroic supposition that the society of Christ is not required to be Christlike.

In the second place, it is possible to admit the vast, insuperable difference between Creator and creature, and upon the very fact of man's derived and dependent existence to found a strong doctrine of society as rightly the issue of love and sacrifice. We shall come back to this point when we deal with the implications of Christian experience. For the present it may be sufficient to urge that no derived existence can find the significance of its potentialities within itself. Human society and human personality must exist for an end purposed by the Creator: and it is impossible to suppose that any created spiritual potentiality can rightly serve an end which does not represent the divine character. The powers of man must always be exercised for or against the divine: he cannot escape his high destiny by claiming that he is only a creature. He is the supreme paradox of the creation, because, having been created, he is called to conscious co-operation with the Creator's purpose.

This is the true deduction from the fact of human creatureship. On the one hand, some forms of

mysticism arrive ultimately at the unreality of human personality. On the other, some forms of humanism declare the helplessness of God. Mystics have spoken of the loss of personal distinctions as the great good. Humanists have spoken of God as blind, until He has produced the human eye, dumb except mankind lend Him voice. The former insult the creation, and the latter the Creator. But the Christian philosophy declares that personal distinctions are permanent, because they are the necessary condition of communion—a thing more precious than bald identity. And the source of human existence remains, transcendent, self-sufficient, having need of nothing, but by an act of overflowing, creative love, calling mankind into being to express and enjoy the bliss and glory of a fellowship whereof the pattern and principle are divine. Apart from that holy end, human life has no conceivable meaning, and all the prophecies of a highly successful and sanitary secularism are mean and hollow. It follows, therefore, that the Church, proclaiming personality and society as perfectly existing in the nature of the Ultimate Reality, must also claim that her conception of God is determinative of human social relations. "God is love," and earthly society becomes godlike only as men learn to love, and find themselves in communion with this holy and eternal generosity. Moreover, the Church which represents herself as society founded upon divine truth, must become the illustration of her own claims. In the modern world she has allowed the secular movement to dominate her; but this, for her, is an unnatural

situation. And we shall see that not only her doctrine of God, but her teaching concerning Incarnation and Atonement, and the whole meaning of Christian experience, call her to be a creative centre of holy revolution.

VI

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE INCARNATION

The Christian Faith holds that the nature of the divine life has been revealed to men, not only by the instrumentality of man's moral consciousness, not only by supernatural communications imparted to a chosen people or to prophetic souls, but by the appearance of a divine Person at a particular place and at a particular time. It is also held that this appearance was accomplished by a genuine entrance of that Person into the race, so that the events of His earthly career have left ineradicable historical effects. It was understood from the first, as we have seen, that such a belief must become a new groundwork of human life, and it was only with the modern, secular movement, that Christian men allowed themselves to be otherwise persuaded. The modern notion that there are spheres of human activity for which the Incarnation has no reference is rank heresy. For more than a millennium of Christian thought and action, such an attitude was unheard of. We have seen how it was first adopted by thinkers who were not closely in sympathy with religion, or were even secretly hostile to it; and in due time the spread

of their teaching began to affect the opinions of the Church.

Buckle, in his *History of Civilization*,[1] discussing the separation of theology from morals and politics, declares that Cumberland, who became Bishop of Peterborough in 1691, was the first of modern ecclesiastics to construct a system of morals and to consider social relations, without the aid of theology; and Whewell, in his *History of Moral Philosophy*,[2] remarks upon Cumberland's complete neglect of the sanctions of revealed religion. But if an Anglican bishop was the first, speaking from within the Church, to separate in any philosophical manner between the province of religion and that of practical moral life, we know that he was but giving systematic expression to the whole drift of the post-Reformation movement in this country; and his position was speedily occupied by others who spoke for Christianity. The Presbyterian clergy, according to Dr Cunningham,[3] favoured such separation. "They saw no need," he says, "to interfere with private action in the interests of a Christian standard for the community, and they held that the prudential pursuit of wealth tended to build up a self-disciplined character, which was favourable to the formation of sober and godly habits."

Now, the assumption that the Christian revelation, and particularly the dogma of Incarnation, can involve no special and unique standards in social and economic relations really overlooks the equation,

[1] Vol. II., p. 387. [2] Page 77.
[3] *Christianity and Economic Science*, pp. 71-2.

in all orthodox Christology, of the Redeemer with the Creator. The meaning of this will appear presently. But the assumption also implies that the social tie by which men are held together within the Church, has no significance for the ethical standards of economic life. This seems hopelessly unphilosophical and unscriptural. But so sweeping and powerful was the movement of secular thought, that if Anglicans and Presbyterians were content to divide the social and industrial order from the control of religious conceptions, Methodism, the youngest of the sects, was not slow to follow them. The Church of Rome still claimed supremacy in the world: but that supremacy was too deeply entangled with mundane methods and ambitions. She certainly did not attempt to forbid her people to do what the Presbyterian clergy were apparently encouraging theirs to do; and it is only in recent years that the voice of Rome has been heard in criticism of the whole modern structure. For generations Rome accepted it as placidly as Anglicans. What she quarrelled about was her own temporal privileges—an attitude which practically condoned the secular motive.

But if Jesus of Nazareth is the Eternal Son of God, bringing the life of the Blessed Trinity within view of men, both the fact of His Incarnation and the content of His teaching must be of capital effect in determining the principles of human association. The separation between religion and social and economic concerns, is frequently defended upon the ground that the teaching of Jesus contains no

"sociology": that His message was purely "religious," and was intended to effect salvation in the world to come. This is a subject of crucial importance; for if we are to discuss the social and economic implications of the Incarnation, we must remember that no *à priori* reasoning as to what the Incarnation ought to mean can properly proceed without reference to the actual teaching delivered by Jesus and recorded in the New Testament. This, of course, raises the question of the economic situation in His time and country; for obviously, knowledge of that situation may affect the interpretation of many of His sayings. If by "sociology," and such terms, is meant a theory of the details of economic administration, then admittedly, Jesus had nothing directly to say upon these points. But if we are discussing the fundamental method of approach to the problem of human organization; the nature and use of wealth; the ultimate end of society—then upon these subjects nobody who ever lived said things more cogent, and more revolutionary toward human preconceptions. And, indeed, it is extremely difficult to understand how Jesus could have uttered one ethical precept at that time, without knowing Himself to be involved in a whole world of economic implications.

There is perhaps no more fascinating department of modern theological scholarship than that which is concerned with the inquiry as to the relation between Jesus and the dominant religious and social conceptions of His environment. I believe the issue will prove that, while He certainly employed many of

these conceptions in His teaching, He was no mere copyist in any respect, but touched them, transmuted and sublimated them with amazing creative genius. Nevertheless, it is important to remember what they were.

So great a scholar as Schweitzer holds it as almost axiomatic that the true centre and turning-point of the Synoptic narratives is the acceptance by Jesus of the Messianic title: and there can be little doubt that St Matthew's Gospel was written with the main purpose of establishing this claim in Jewish eyes. Now, we know that the Messianic hopes of the Old Testament had been closely connected with expectations of a definitely social and economic character. They had reference both to the person of the Messiah and to the nature of His Kingdom. Thus when the seventy-second Psalm (which I believe all Jewish commentators, at any rate, have regarded as Messianic) speaks of the great King, it declares that "he shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. . . . He shall deliver the needy when he crieth, and the poor that hath no helper. He shall have pity on the poor and needy and the souls of the needy shall he save. He shall redeem their soul from fraud and violence; and precious shall their blood be in his sight: and they shall live. . . ." And when Micah speaks of the kingdom or commonwealth that is to be, he declares not only that war shall disappear, but that "they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree; and none shall make them afraid."

When, in later Judaism, there arose the extraordinary apocalyptic and eschatological literature (the importance of which scholars have only really begun to estimate in our generation), a personal figure and a kingdom are still very vital elements in it. The roots of this development have been found in *Daniel* where the Kingdom of the Son of Man, appearing upon earth, is so emphatically contrasted with the Kingdoms of the Beasts which had preceded it. And in much of this apocalyptic literature of later Judaism, the blessings of the reign of the Son of Man were foretold in very concrete terms. Thus in the Enoch literature, while transcendentalism and nationalism are vaguely mingled, the outstanding implication is that the Son of Man, now regarded as pre-existent and co-judge with God over the living and the dead, is to appear and to found a new order of human life. And the view which the Enoch literature took of the then established conditions may be judged from such words as these: "Woe unto you who heap up silver and gold and say, We are growing rich, we have acquired everything we desire. . . . Like water your lies will flow away, your riches will not abide with you, but shall suddenly disappear, for you have acquired it all in unrighteousness, and you shall be given over to great condemnation" (Enoch xcvii. 8-10). Here is another passage: "Woe unto you sinners, for your riches made you appear like the righteous, but your hearts convict you of being sinners. . . . Woe unto you who devour the finest of the wheat . . . and tread underfoot the lowly with your might" (Enoch xcvi.

4-5). And in the Psalms of Solomon, the Messiah is portrayed as conquering the world, not with earthly weapons, but with a word, and making Jerusalem the capital and centre of a world at peace and delivered from every cause of strife. This kingdom, according to much of this literature, was to be inaugurated at the "Day of Yahveh," when the Hebrew nation was to receive all kinds of political and social blessings.

Now, our Lord, according to the Synoptic testimony, did not disclaim the ascription of Messiahship. And what is more, He employed the terminology of the apocalyptic literature, and gave utterance to certain statements of pronounced eschatological character. He not only called Himself "Son of Man," but a large part of His teaching was concerned with the subject of a new kingdom. And He even appears to have made use of the conception of the "Day of Yahveh." The phrase "that day," occurs more than once in His eschatological utterances; and this seems to have been specially noted in the Christian community, for we find St Paul referring upon two or three occasions to "the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." Certainly Jesus emphasized the notion of judgment, which was so marked a feature of the apocalyptic literature: and in Jewish thought the notion of divine judgment had never lost the social and economic significance which it had in the mind of Amos when he declared: "Thus saith the Lord: for three transgressions of Israel, yea, for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have sold the righteous

for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes: that pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor, and turn aside the way of the meek." [1]

Seeing, therefore, that Jesus accepted for His teaching a conceptual mould, which was so closely connected with anticipations of social and economic change, we may suppose that if He had considered those anticipations entirely irrelevant, He would have spared no pains to make this abundantly clear. But He offered no criticism of these anticipations in themselves. Where He parted company with the popular enthusiasm of His day was as to the manner in which they were to be realized. That the coming of the Son of Man meant a new kingdom, He never denied: and the characteristics of that kingdom as He described them are certainly irreconcilable with any human order which has yet been established in this world. But there are clear indications in the Gospel narratives that Jesus was a disappointment to the political zealots, and a source of bewilderment to His own disciples; because, although He proclaimed the kingdom, He took no such measures to establish it as they could understand.

In view of the fact, however, that the very mould in which He cast His message was bound to awaken expectations of social rearrangement and economic redress, I think we may conclude that had our Lord regarded those expectations as quite unimportant and beside the mark, we should have found in the Gospel record some well-defined and indisputable

[1] Amos ii. 6, 7.

expression of this attitude. I think nothing of the kind is to be found. But it may be suggested that the economic situation was not at that time so difficult as to require our Lord to discuss any irrelevant suppositions that might arise in the minds of His hearers ; that, in any case, economic problems, as we understand them, would not trouble either Him or them to any great extent. This, I think, is totally to misunderstand the position.

The economic history of the Roman Empire has for some years been attracting the attention of investigators. It is a study of the greatest possible interest ; and the course of imperial financial development is important here, because the position of Rome affected the entire civilized world. We know, from the pages of Mommsen,[1] the condition of affairs in which the republic came to an end. Octavius Augustus came to the control of an empire in which at the very centre the economic problems had long been of the gravest character. The problems with which Julius Cæsar had struggled were vast and complex. Mommsen declares that in consequence of an economic system " based both in its agrarian and mercantile aspects on masses of capital and on speculation, there arose a most fearful disproportion in the distribution of wealth. The often-used and often-abused phrase of a commonwealth compounded of millionaires and beggars applies nowhere so completely as to the Rome of the last age of the republic : and nowhere perhaps has the essential maxim of the slave-state—that the rich

[1] *History of Rome*, Book V. chap. xi.

man who lives by the exertion of his slaves is necessarily respectable, and the poor man who lives by the labour of his hands is necessarily vulgar—been recognized with so terrible a precision as the undoubted principle underlying all public and private intercourse." Those are Mommsen's own words. He goes on to describe the evidence of the increasing impoverishment of the multitude, and the heaping up of enormous fortunes by the great speculators; and he explains how wealth corrupted both politics and art. The most honourable offices in the State were bought and sold. Meanwhile standards of the most fantastic luxury were set up and had to be complied with by those who would enter fashionable and public life. The result was that the money-lenders (even at that time they were often Jews) did a roaring trade, and half the leaders of society were in their toils. In 62 B.C. Julius Cæsar owed a sum equalling £250,000 of our pre-war money, even after deducting his assets. Marcus Antonius, at the age of twenty-four, owed £60,000, and fourteen years later, £400,000. The whole edifice of pomp and magnificence rested upon financial credit, which any tremor of sudden panic might shake to its foundations. And, indeed, organized panics and swindling operations upon the money-market were by no means unknown. The condition of the masses was growing more desperate while their virtues were being sapped by idleness: and the rich engaged in every form of expensive debauchery and dissolute indulgence. Mommsen concludes his survey, which I have briefly summarized, with the following

words: "It is a dreadful picture—this picture of Italy under the rule of the oligarchy. There was nothing to bridge over or soften the fatal contrast between the world of the beggars and the world of the rich. . . . The wider the chasm by which the two worlds were externally divided, the more completely they coincided in the like annihilation of family life . . . in laziness and luxury, the like unsubstantial economy, the like unmanly dependence, the like corruption differing only in scale, the like criminal demoralization, the like longing to begin the war with property." But Mommsen adds that this picture is not one peculiar to Italy. "Wherever," says he, "the government of capitalists in a slave-state has fully developed itself, it has desolated God's fair world in the same way."

Mommsen admits that the measures adopted by Julius Cæsar, though they were a considerable achievement, were inadequate, and that the evils of the Italian national economy generally were incurable by any government. Nor had the evil disappeared under all the success of Augustus. And it is at once obvious that this condition of affairs must have cast a shadow upon the whole Mediterranean civilization of the period: for what we see there is a thing comparable to the unification of the modern world. The economic history of Rome and Italy is therefore the great background upon which we must glance at the economic conditions in Palestine at the time of Jesus; for though in the meantime the genius of Octavius had effected many good results, the fact remains that a grave economic

problem lay at the heart of the world's civilization. The ever-increasing imperial responsibilities were hotly debated in their effects upon the financial situation in Rome: and this meant that the administration of the provinces could seldom be very generous. If Rome brought order, Rome had to be paid: and the civil order that Rome brought, valuable as it was, had the effect of drawing the provinces within the circumference of the Roman economic whirlpool.

Now, Palestine had become a sort of feudal state under Rome, in 63 B.C., during a period of turmoil and confusion; and eventually the Romans set up a king in the person of Herod. The ethical side of this monarch's person we need not discuss; but the economic effect of his reign is important for us. His wars and his building operations involved the country in great expense. He had a mania for building, and by his command towns, fortifications, amphitheatres, hippodromes and aqueducts sprang up on every side.[1] He reconstructed the Temple at Jerusalem, so that, as Josephus tells us, the famous Temple of Solomon was poor and insignificant beside it.[2] For all this, of course, the people had to pay. Herod also spent lavishly upon games; and he left a huge private fortune, the greater part of which he had exacted from the nation. Shortly after his death, a committee of Jews stated to the Emperor that Herod had scandalously treated them, and had filled the nation full of poverty.

[1] Josephus, *Wars*, 5, 4, 4. *Antiquities*, 15, 8, 1.
[2] *Wars*, 1, 21, 1.

Conditions did not improve under his sons, Herod Antipas in Galilee and Perea, and Archelaus in Judea and Samaria. An outbreak of brigandage and robbery upon a large scale marked their accession to power, increasing the already sufficiently difficult lot of the populace.[1] Taxation was enormous. There was a tax on the produce of the land, one-tenth for grain, one-fifth for wine and fruit. There was a poll-tax of one denarius per caput. There was an income-tax, probably of 1 per cent. There were taxes upon many trades, and on movable property. There were duties upon imported goods, of from 2½ per cent. to 12 per cent. There was a house-tax in the cities. Bridge and road tolls were in operation. There was a tax on public sales. In addition to all this, each city had to find the money for its own local administration.[2] We do not know how much the Roman Government collected, but Judea was no better off when, in the year A.D. 6, Archelaus was deposed, and it became incorporated in the Roman Province of Syria. Tacitus records that in the year A.D. 17, the discontent caused by taxation became serious throughout the whole province.[3] And we have always to bear in mind that the fiscal arrangement, by which the taxes were farmed, hugely increased the burden upon the common people.

Now, so far from Jesus exhibiting no interest in

[1] *Wars*, 2, 4, 2-3.
[2] Edersheim, Hamburger, Marquandt. Quoted by Heuver, *Teaching of Jesus concerning Wealth*. Fleming Revell, 1903.
[3] Tacitus, *Annals*, II, 42, 43.

this situation, His parables and other utterances are simply saturated with the atmosphere of the place and time. It has been said by an American student that the social background of Jesus' teaching is " one of business depression, panics, and poverty." There is very much to be said for this opinion. No doubt Galilee was a thickly populated and wonderfully productive country ; but there is also little doubt that economic difficulties were very rife. Glance at the Gospels. There we find debtors going to prison, creditors discounting bills : a man tries to build a tower which he cannot complete for lack of funds. A woman has for her whole living only two mites. " In one of the parables of Jesus," it has been remarked, " everybody except the king is bankrupt : the steward is in debt to the king, the servant to the steward." [1] People were very anxious about food and raiment. A small loss of money, a single drachma, worth about 8d., caused a woman sharp distress. There was great inequality in the distribution of wealth. We hear of a man dressed in purple and faring sumptuously every day, while at his gate lay a beggar, glad to get the scraps which were thrown out to the dogs in the street. Philo complains of the indifference of the wealthy to the poor, and declares that they are appropriating " the whole of nature's liberality to themselves, and giving no share of their wealth to anyone." [2] There was no organized endeavour to help the poor ; and those who failed, got little mercy. Even those who had means could get scant justice, except by bribery.

[1] Heuver, *Teaching of Jesus concerning Wealth.*
[2] Philo, *Three Virtues,* III, 8.

A few months after the birth of Christ, a Jewish commission waiting upon Augustus to protest against the appointment of Archelaus, declared that his predecessor had maintained a system of corruption in the courts, and that there was no way of obtaining freedom from unjust violence without giving gold and silver for it.[1] This state of affairs is reflected, of course, in the parable of the importunate widow and the unjust judge. The debtor was given little mercy. Our Lord advises that it is well to agree with one's adversary—one's creditor, apparently—as quickly as possible, lest one be cast into prison. "Verily I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." In one parable, one of the debtors is threatened with being sold, together with his wife and children, and another delivered to the tormentors. Those who were sold for debt were subjected to the grossest indignities. We gather from a parable related by St Luke that slaves both male and female were beaten (Luke xii. 45): St Matthew seems to suggest that they were scourged (Matt. xxiv. 49). And, according to Philo, slaves were yoked to the plough, like oxen.[2]

The very employment of such facts and incidents by Jesus in His parables is evidence that they were no singular and rare phenomena, for the whole method of our Lord was to select His illustrations from the commonest of everyday occurrences. But, when we remember the slight body of His utterance

[1] Josephus, *Antiquities*, 17, 11, 2.
[2] *Ten Festivals*, vol. III, p. 274, Yonge's Ed., quoted by Heuver.

which has come down to us, references such as these seem to occupy a large place in them, and this seems to show that the economic conditions of His time occupied a good deal of His observation. And when we recollect the economic significance of the Messianic hope and the Apocalyptic literature, whose forms of thought Jesus used; and when we place side by side with this, the references which He made, so casually, to the economic conditions surrounding Him, we shall begin to suspect that He was thoroughly cognizant of the whole situation and deeply interested in it; and that the great *motif* of His ethical teaching had a direct relation thereto. But what positive conclusions did He reach? It is quite true that He left us no detailed scheme of an ideal social system; but He did enunciate a body of teaching in which lay three great principles which have the most cogent and direct economic reference.

1. He taught that human life should be founded upon a profound gratitude, and not upon a conception of rights. It is remarkable that although the dignity of man is taught by Jesus in diverse ways, He yet says nothing whatever about the rights of man. He taught that the whole of human existence was a provision of God's love. No man by taking thought could add one cubit to his stature. It was God who arrayed the lilies of the field and made the sun to shine upon the just and the unjust. Men had therefore to commence with the fundamental principle of their indebtedness; and they were not even to accept daily bread as a right, even after they

had worked for it, but were to ask for it in their prayers. Consequently, the whole of human activity ought to be an offering of gratitude for an existence which man had received—which was something primarily given. This gift of God cut beneath all considerations of merit and right, and, therefore, when men had performed all their duties, they were still unprofitable servants. This is economic teaching of a most revolutionary character. It asserts that there can be no absolute human ownership : that not even may a man own his own life. All is given, and it is the Giver's purpose which must be considered and served in all things : and that is why Jesus is constantly speaking of the Will of His Father. The direct implication is that the claim to rights in any absolute sense is without sanction. Property, for example, as Mr Tawney would say, may exist only for function ; and if possessions are held they must become an instrument of thanksgiving and a means of sacrifice.

2. He taught, again, that the end of our existence is not in material things. He was greatly concerned that people should not be anxious about food and clothing, and about their economic prospects. Such anxiety distracted men from the true end of life, and caused them to miss life's meaning in worrying about its means. Nor did He regard riches as a refuge from anxiety, but only as an increase of its burden. A rich man was like a laden camel ; and He bade one rich man sell all he possessed. There is no recorded instance of His telling the rich to stick to their possessions at all costs. He is reported to have said,

"Blessed are ye poor"; but having searched the Gospel narratives through, I have to confess that I have found no corresponding blessing for the rich. Jesus did not think their lot in the least enviable. What He told men to seek as the most important of all ends, was the Kingdom of God: to leave their clashing interests, and to look for that. And He declared that if they would do so, they would find that all the things about which they were so anxious would be added unto them. Herein He exhibits, surely not a remoteness from economic concerns, but a new method of approach to them. He suggests that there are prior considerations, which, when properly attended to will have an economic result both swift and sure: and it looks as if He was very desirous that such a result should be brought about.

3. Thirdly, He taught that life must be organized, not primarily for rewards and gains, but for service. "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority (play the tyrant) upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." This was to be the guiding principle in the structure of society, and it was the logical outcome of the other principles we have already discussed. And let it be noticed that our Lord does not dream of confining this principle to a purely religious organization within a secular society controlled by opposite principles, so that His followers shall apply one principle in their religious society and another in

their secular society. He enunciates His conception as intended to abolish the accepted standards of life. "It shall not be so among you." The standards of the pagan world were to be entirely rejected, and the standard of service was therefore to become operative throughout the whole scheme of human relations. And clearly, if men had no absolute and unconditioned rights, and if the end of life were a moral and spiritual kingdom of love, then all overweening care for rewards and gains, and all pride of social caste were absurd. Men should sit lightly, as it were, to the material instrument, finding in it not a means of symbolizing their selfishness and self-importance, but of signifying their willingness to serve: so that if one should be sued at law for his coat, it were better that he should give his cloak also, rather than engage in wrangling about personal possessions.

Thus our Lord conceived an order of life based upon certain clear principles: man's dependence upon God; life as a process whereof the only significance was spiritual; service, with the implication of co-operation, as the means of approach between man and man. He desiderates a new concern for others, founded upon a new trust in God. You may say that He was an idealist or a visionary; but you cannot say that He was unconcerned with this world's affairs. Yet it is alleged that upon several occasions He deliberately refused to touch economic questions, and appeared content to submit to the economic order of His age, as if this had little bearing upon His mission. Five incidents are

usually cited. There is, of course, the story of the man who asked Jesus to intervene in a dispute about a family inheritance. This, however, is not an economic question at all, but a mere family squabble. But when Jesus asked "Who made me a judge or divider over you?" I believe He was simply refusing to accept the premisses of either party in the debate; for He went on to warn His hearers against covetousness and the desire for possessions. It is this attitude of His which has misled many people into supposing that there are no economic deductions to be drawn from His Gospel. But people fail to see the deductions because the principles are so utterly revolutionary. We observe the same attitude again, in the two instances in which He was confronted with the question of taxation. At Capernaum St Peter was approached by the officials who wished to learn whether Jesus was prepared to pay the didrachma Temple tax. He assumed that Jesus would pay it; but when he informed his Master of what had occurred, Jesus asked him whether the kings drew their taxes from their own sons or from strangers. The answer was, "from strangers"; and Jesus replied, "Therefore the sons are free." Surely there can be only one conclusion: Jesus objected to the whole principle of human organization upon which the taxation was based. Nevertheless, He had to face the practical question of paying or not paying, and there seems a touch of divine humour in His directing St Peter to find the money in a fish's mouth. And, again, when the Pharisees, with a number of Herodians, inquired of Him whether it

was lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar, He replied, looking at a Roman coin, " Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's." This is a good example of His wonderful dialectical skill when opposed by cunning and trickiness. But it is something more. At first sight it looks like splitting man's life into unrelated compartments; but when we recall the whole teaching of our Lord, we see that unless Cæsar (or the government) is in harmony with God's nature and will he has no absolute claim upon men; and our Lord's dictum that we are to give unto God the things that are God's means that at any time there might be very little left for Cæsar.

But the whole incident reveals Jesus in His constant attitude of refusing to accept the economic and political premisses of this world. He would have men begin at the right end; and His attitude appears to be an utter condemnation of the accepted standards of our present society. So far from our Lord accepting our contemporary economic order, His teaching is the only force which shows the slightest promise of dislodging it and replacing it by a true one. The two remaining instances of His alleged aloofness from social affairs are those in which He refused to allow Himself to be made a king, and in which He declared before Pilate that His Kingdom was not of this world. Both are recorded in the Fourth Gospel; and I think neither of them leads to any other conclusion than that which we have already reached.

I take it, therefore, that Jesus conceived a com-

plete revolution of human standards, a revolution which was to be based upon a supernatural reality. And certainly the first social effect of His ministry was something very like a commune. But this, of course, raises the crucial problem. Some, like Friedrich Naumann, have seen the beauty of His vision, but have felt it impossible of application because it involves supernatural postulates. How can it be expected that these high demands can be complied with in this world? Is it even intended that they should be? The answer to this question takes us out of the realms of ethics and economics, and into the province of theology. Behind the teaching of Jesus is the fact of Jesus, and the Church has resolutely refused to separate between these two considerations. With a strange insight and foresight she divined that the only ultimate sanction for the ethical demands of Jesus was a doctrine of the Person of Jesus. Nor, I think, was this doctrine entirely a superstructure of the theologians—not even of St Paul. The synoptic narratives present a self-consciousness which has never been satisfactorily explained in terms of human psychology. Moreover, there is little doubt that from the first the devotional practice of the Church has implied all that the orthodox theologians afterward stated. And the implications, both of the adoration of Jesus and of the Dogma of Incarnation, are most relevant to the precise nature of the Christian ethic and the economic which it involves.

In the first place, however, we have to observe that if Christ is God speaking in person, His teaching

is absolute. His ethic is not a stage in the human realization of the divine nature and will, but is that divine nature in final utterance. Hence there can be no question of adapting and transmuting the teaching of Jesus to suit our situation. The only question is how soon we are going to adapt and transmute our situation to bring it into harmony with His teaching. There can be no assumption such as that which Naumann made, that the Christian ethic is in large part impracticable because it does not suit the conditions of the modern capitalist and militarist world. The dogmatic, axiomatic assumption is that the modern world is unpractical because it does not tally with the ethic of Jesus. And appearances seem to indicate that this assumption is not incapable of experimental verification.

Now, the ethic of Jesus and its implied economic, are therefore like nothing else in the world, for they are bound up with the revelation of Ultimate Reality, conceived as it could never otherwise have been conceived. In other words, they are based upon the Incarnation of the Eternal Son of God, "humbling Himself," and suffering hardship, insult and shame. Jesus asks of men a new attitude to life which must display itself in every sphere; and this He asks, not as a teacher of morals and philosophy, but as God suffering for them. This that they see and hear in Him, is the nature of that Ultimate Reality to which they must conform. Thus the dogma of Incarnation becomes the final sanction of all the principles laid down in our Lord's teaching; and not only so, but the dogma itself is seen to involve

postulates of direct economic significance. I will state four such implications.

1. *The Corporate Unity of Mankind.* The dogma that God has, by one historic act, effected something determinative for all men and women, involves that there is in mankind a basal unity which needs to be made manifest in human affairs. When the Nicene Creed declares that Very God of Very God came down for us men and our salvation, the solidarity of the race is assumed, and there is at once implied the ethical doctrine of the common good; and the obvious translation of this into economic terms is co-operation. The supposition that the principle of human solidarity may be true for the deepest levels of spiritual life, and yet may be disregarded in the outward activities of men, is patently absurd; and it is therefore not surprising that individualist economics have arisen in connection with those religious movements which have most signally avoided corporate conceptions in religion. That this has actually happened is declared by writers so diverse as Troeltsch, Max Weber, Louis Blanc, Cardinal Gasquet, Bishop Westcott, Max Beer, Mr H. G. Wood, and Mr Tawney.[1] But, however true it may be that Jesus revealed the value of the individual soul, it is equally true that this value, in His Gospel, is meaningless, apart from the whole conception of human solidarity. No matter how great may be the significance of the Incarnation for me as a person, the fact remains that this signifi-

[1] O'Brien, *Economic Effects of the Reformation,* chap. ii. 1923.

cance reaches me only because I am a member of a race. Jesus does not come to the race as to a series of isolated individuals. He came to one place for a few years, and thus to all mankind; and He wrought an act for a corporate body which is Man.

Those who accept this as the groundwork of their behaviour in this world, cannot possibly be content with an economic system which is based upon an atomistic conception of mankind and assumes, either that there is no common good, or else that the common good is best attained by the perpetual rivalry and destructive competition of individuals, sections, classes, or nations. The latter was the contention of the philosophic Individualism of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and it is now widely agreed that later events have not justified it. But Christian people ought to see that it is fundamentally unjustifiable upon the grounds of Christian doctrine. If the Incarnation is a fact, then Individualism is a wrong method of approach to life. The assumption that by outrivalling my neighbour in the struggle I am securing not my own interests alone, but the interests of society, displays a profound incapacity to understand either what an individual is, or what society is. Indeed, the Individualists never claimed to show *how* the common good was served by Individualism. They shut their eyes and declared that some magical operation of providence brought social advantage out of private selfishness. They seemed to think that this was a divine law. But the divinest law we know, when it spoke to individuals,

said never a word about their duty of looking after their own isolated interests. What it did say was, "If any man would come after me, let him take up the Cross and follow me." That was how the principle of solidarity affected the individual, in the mind of Jesus. He appears to suggest that we should forget ourselves and think of Him. And the dogma of Incarnation explains that in thinking of Him we are thinking of all mankind.

2. The second implication is that of *the Equality of all Men*. I think no Christian man or woman will question that in their relations with God in Christ, all the sons of men must proceed upon exactly the same footing. Their universal likeness consists in their infinite need and indebtedness. All alike owe their existence and their redemption to God, and this is the most significant fact about each one of them. Thus, upon the deepest levels of life, they are all perfectly equal in having no ground of personal merit. The General Confession and the Doctrine of Original Sin are extremely dangerous, for they imply that the solemn gradations of social rank, if they are allowed to produce huge rewards and luxurious ease for some, and unremitting hardship and poverty for others, are a vast and violent misinterpretation of the real human situation in face of divine reality. Let us see what this means.

It would be possible, I suppose, to speak of the corporate unity of mankind, and at the same time to deny equality. I suppose that there was corporate

unity in the German army; and there may be corporate unity, of a sort, in a prison. But the Christian conception—I will say the Catholic conception—of the relation between God and the soul, though it rightly conceives that relation as being established and preserved within a society, does actually imply the personal relation of the soul with its Creator. It implies that what was done at Bethlehem was something done for that soul. All those within the Christian society, therefore, and all men since they are potentially members of that society, are to be treated not as instruments, but as constructive centres of social life. The economic implication is that though functions may differ, the intrinsic worth of *man's functioning* is in all cases equal where it is the best service that a man can bring; and consequently wide disparity of material rewards represents no spiritual reality. Surely the fact that God became man in the ranks of the poor means something, and implies a rebuke to all our struggling for economic advantage over our fellows. The Incarnation reverses our standards because it reveals the profound truth that the only real precedence is precedence in sacrificial service; and it is impossible to pretend that an order which allows to one individual a final control over the economic position of many, has any sort of relation with the Christian religion. Surely there is a dangerous fallacy in an economic system which can allow men to be designated as instruments in the creation of material wealth in which they are to have little share; to be called "hands," and to receive from

the fruits of their labour only sufficient to enable them to go on labouring, while others, who neither toil nor spin, fare sumptuously every day. The Incarnation implies that the Human Organism is composed of persons, capable of tenderest relations with God; and if in any sphere of our corporate life we assume that this fact may be disregarded, we are storing up trouble.

3. The third implication is that *material things find their significance only as they are employed for spiritual ends*. There is no need to labour the theological argument at this point. If human flesh has been worn as the clothing of God; if carpenter's tools have been handled by the Creator of the world; if earthly roads have been trodden by

> Those beauteous feet
> Which brought from heaven the news
> And Prince of Peace,

then there can be no doubt that this view of the uses of material things is a true inference. I think I am right in saying that the Christian doctrine of the spiritual significance of the material world is unique both in form and in ethos. In passing to the economic aspects of this principle, we shall find ourselves in direct conflict with the standards of the modern world.

What is the main, distinguishing feature of capitalist industrialism as we know it to-day? It is not precisely that the capital is not owned by the

workers, for in the Middle Ages there were many sorts of workers who did not own capital. Nor is it that modern capitalism is concerned with large-scale industry. Italy in the sixteenth century had many large-scale industries. What does chiefly distinguish modern capitalist industrialism is a particular attitude, a particular point of view, in regard to the creation of wealth; and concerning this I will allow others to speak. Sir William Ashley, in his *Economic Organization of England*,[1] defines the capitalistic spirit as "the desire of investment for the sake of gain." Troeltsch, in his *Protestantism and Progress*,[2] says that "the capitalist spirit displays an untiring activity, a boundlessness of grasp . . . it makes work and gain ends in themselves, and makes men the slaves of work for work's sake." Mr Tawney [3] compares capitalism to militarism, which, says he, is "not any particular quality or scale of military preparation, but a state of mind which, in its concentration on one particular element in social life, ends finally by exalting it until it becomes the arbiter of all the rest." And he adds, "What the military tradition and spirit did for Prussia, with the result of creating militarism, the commercial tradition and spirit have done for England, with the result of creating industrialism." These quotations, I think, do bring us to the real centre of the modern economic problem.

If we search for the root of the modern trouble we shall find it in that attitude of practical atheism

[1] Ashley, p. 141. [2] Troeltsch, pp. 133-4.
[3] Tawney, *Acquisitive Society*, pp. 46-7.

which would confine human activity to the scope of the visible world, and finds the purpose of life in the gratification of the instinct for accumulating material goods. The attitude of capitalist industrialism, as these eminent writers describe it, is a huge impertinence, because it assumes that man, who created neither himself nor the world, has the right to say what shall be done with the world; and that its sole employment shall be for the satisfaction of his own greed. This is a hideous distortion; and it is very remarkable that the great saints who appeared early in the modern period were already emphatic in warning men against such misuse of the instrument.[1] For, what does capitalist industrialism mean? It means, as surely as any philosophic naturalism, that religion, art, music, are epiphenomena of small importance. It is well known that it has debased artistic standards; but its effect upon religion has been even more disastrous. Capitalistic Christianity is the smuggest and ugliest of all forms of hypocrisy. It seeks to employ the Church as a missionary of respectability, by which is meant the acceptance of the codes of plutocracy. It makes of religion a new sort of selfishness. But it has only one God, and that is Mammon—material wealth, grasped, possessed and worshipped for its own sake, and as the ultimate standard of well-being. This is the one idolatry with which Mr Kensit or anyone else need bother his head. When our Lord said of a piece of bread, "This is my body," upon

[1] For example, St Ignatius Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises*, St Francis de Sales, *Devout Life*, and others, on Detachment.

any interpretation He did imply that He was its only true possessor. But the rich fool who said, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up," implied that the goods were *his* body, and he their rightful master. Yet when he came to decide what he should do with his life, he found that his life had no meaning beyond those goods. That is chiefly what ails our modern society; and that is why spiritual vision, the vision of the Word made Flesh, is the only force which can deliver us from our entanglements. The modern world has the impression that life cannot be worth living unless it consists of food and raiment in abundance. But when we have learned that it may be divinely honourable to have not where to lay our heads: when we have really begun to look for the Kingdom of God; then we may discover that the ordering of our spiritual relations has made the ordering of our economic relations a comparatively simple thing, and we shall find that all these things are being added unto us. In other words, we shall find that the material instrument will work, when we use it for its proper end—the glory of God. For then we shall know that no possession or property is ever rightly an end in itself, but only a means of service and praise in the Kingdom of the Spirit and the City of the Redeemed.

4. The fourth and final implication is that the dogma of Incarnation requires of men *a particular motive in their whole approach to life*, and thus in the field of labour and economic relations. If it is a fact that human existence is contingent upon the

creative generosity of God ; and if it is also true that the well-being of man in the entire range of his activity is dependent upon the historic act of Incarnation, then, quite obviously, the only respectable attitude for any man to adopt is that he is fundamentally in debt to start with, and that his whole activity in this world must be dominated by the spirit of gratitude and the desire for service. This, of course, is precisely what our Lord taught, but we see it now as an implication of what He was. To attempt to limit this implication to the sphere of mystical religion is to make not only the Cross, but the Manger, of none effect in great fields of conduct. To say that this implication may be sufficiently expressed in occasional acts of generosity or charity, is merely to be disingenuous. For it really means that the Christian religion is essentially and diametrically opposed to any scheme of economics based upon individual self-interest. The requirement that individuals shall push and advertise themselves, concerned only to secure the greatest possible material reward for their services, ignores what God did in becoming man. This cupidinous huckstering, this rough-and-tumble scrimmage, which is called the modern economic system, is not consonant with the nature of divine reality, as the Christian faith conceives it. It makes little difference here, whether a man call himself Evangelical or Catholic. Both types regard men as fundamentally indebted to God ; both equate the Redeemer with the Creator and proclaim His lordship in every sphere ; both have the duty of pointing

out the inferences. But the Catholic has less excuse for hesitation, because he proclaims solidarity in religion and the dependence of the individual upon the religious community; and if any religious principle is to be applied to economic relations, this must be applied.

Such are the social implications of the dogma of the Incarnation of the Son of God. They are much more surely secured by orthodoxy than they would have been by any of the great Christological heresies. Docetism, Apollinarianism, Eutychianism, mutilated or limited the humanity of our Lord, so that while we may say this is God, we cannot say that He *came down;* and thus we forfeit the sanctions of complete self-giving. Nestorianism, which posits a human personality united with God, so that Mary was not *theotekos*, conceives God as somehow in union with one man, but not necessarily with the race; and thus we lose the sanction of solidarity and its inference of co-operation. Arianism denies that it was God who came down, and thus we have no absolute sanction for the Christian ethic of generosity and compassion. And it is significant that in the Arian controversy, the chief forces of privilege and worldly power were instinctively arrayed on the side of the heresy. Finally, theories of Adoptionism, which conceive Jesus as a human person somehow achieving divinity, though they find modern favour, carry no social implications of the kind which we have drawn from the orthodox dogma. They show us the achievement of one man, but offer no grounds for belief in human solidarity; and they remove all

those sanctions which we discover in the faith that He who was rich for our sakes became poor. They preach a man exalted. The Christian religion begins with a God humbled and made of no reputation; and surely, it is the belief that God has so expressed Himself within our human race and nature, that must constitute the ground of the final revolution.

The Church claims to be the Society of the Incarnation—the actual effect and indeed the continuance of the Incarnation in this world. That this was the intention in her Founder's mind was evidently St Paul's belief; and, indeed, if we hold the faith that the entrance of Christ into human history was actually of redemptive effect, we must eventually conclude that a society must be built upon Him, organically, historically and ethically bound to Him. It would seem, then, that the scope of the Church is far wider than the modern world allows. For many centuries the Church did claim that her fellowship possessed significance throughout the entire human order. The scholastic theologians assumed that economics was a branch of theology, and that the Church ought to guide the economic life of Christendom. And it seems that if this broken and bewildered world is to be saved from complete chaos, the Church, which is still the only institution claiming to possess absolute and transcendent grounds for anything, must address herself to an immense twofold task. She must become once again central in the affairs of men; but for this she needs to accomplish two things: she needs to solve

the problem of her own divisions and to present the world with a co-ordinated society of Christian people; and she needs fearlessly to set forth the implications of the Faith, in the ordering of the social and economic relations of her sons and daughters.

VII

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE ATONEMENT

If our main conception is true, and the teachings of the Christian Faith, concerning the nature of Ultimate Reality and man's relation thereto, are of the most direct significance for the ordering of human society, it must follow that since the Christian consciousness has always placed a central emphasis upon the death of Jesus, that event must exert a function of supreme guidance in human relations, and must be a governing force in the accomplishment of social consolidation. This, however, implies that we have at least some apprehension of what the death of Christ effects, what was its cause and what its purpose; and, as is well known, we come now to a field of controversy in which the Church has never offered any clear and positive definition. Indeed, the long succession of unsatisfying theories of Atonement has eventually produced something of distaste for all such theorizing, and the popular religious mind either accepts without reflection the dogma that Christ's sacrifice procures man's salvation, or, having reflected a little, holds that this sacrifice was given in precisely such a manner and for similar ends, as the sacrifices of other

great martyrs: that Jesus was before His time, was misunderstood, but refused to deny His vision and preferred to suffer the inevitable result of the conflict between that vision and the accepted standards of His place and age. The effect of His sufferings may thus be said to procure atonement, since they move us to behold and accept His teaching, and thus to desire and achieve union with God.

Now, the first thing to be said of this "subjective" explanation, is that it is as much a theory as any other doctrine of Atonement. And it is an extremely unsatisfactory theory, despite its appearance of reasonableness. It generally accompanies the lack of a Christology, and goes hand in hand with merely sentimental praise of Jesus, which serves to conceal the absence of genuine belief in the Incarnation. But it does not explain anything. It is, as a matter of fact, exceedingly difficult to hold that Jesus died as a martyr; for a martyr dies for "a cause," and it is by no means easy to say precisely for what "cause" Jesus was put to death. Some elements of His teaching were violently disliked by the religious leaders of Judaism, but it is very doubtful whether they would have dared to institute proceedings against Him upon this ground alone. Indeed, according to the Gospel records, the Jewish authorities made little attempt to formulate a charge of that sort. When they at last held Him in their grasp, they appear not even to have discussed His universalism, His criticism of pharisaism, or His attitude to the Sabbath. The witnesses they had procured proved unsatisfactory, and their

evidence so useless as a ground for a criminal prosecution, that there was only one point in which it seemed at all promising—Jesus had said that He would destroy the temple and build it again in three days. Even this was passed over, and the High Priest was compelled to come to what clearly, in his mind, was the real issue : *I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.* It is possible that it was our Lord's definite acceptance of the Messianic title that Judas had recently betrayed, and that the authorities had arrested Him upon this information, feeling that it gave them a good case against Him. At all events, when He made no attempt to deny the charge, the examination came abruptly to an end.

When He appeared before Pilate, the accusation simply translated this Messianic claim into an act of disloyalty to Cæsar. This, of course, was a grossly dishonest proceeding, for if to announce oneself as the Messiah necessarily involved opposition to the Roman government, that was no reason why one claiming Messiahship should be impeached by His own countrymen who desired the Messiah's advent, since upon such ground they must in honour have impeached a Messiah in whom they believed. It thus becomes obvious that while it was not for His teaching alone that Jesus was condemned, neither was it precisely the bare fact of His Messianic claim that brought about His end. A Messiah conformable to current expectations would never have been haled before Pilate. The reason why Jesus was prosecuted upon a capital charge was that the

leaders of His nation refused to tolerate the notion of *such* a Messiah. For Messianic thought had reached profound doctrinal implications. The Messiah was to come forth from God, was to reveal the will of God; and if Jesus was this revelation, the pharisaic moral authority was convicted of seriously misrepresenting God.

This at once carries us beyond the sphere of human martyrdom, since the crucial point upon which our Lord was condemned was that He would not deny the significance of His own Person. He would not deny that He was the Christ, the Son of God. The nature and tendency of His teaching were a secondary consideration here. The primary question was that of the nature of His authority. Did He claim that His standards of life were of immediate divine sanction: that His utterances were the utterances of God: that He and His teaching were the only proper completion of all previous prophecy? He refused to abate His claim, and thus He may be said to have died in testimony to Himself. But no martyr ever does this. What sustains the martyr is his vivid perception of what he takes to be objective truth, something above and independent of himself, to which he feels bound to pay costly tribute. This is his "cause"; and no matter how that "cause" may exalt him, how deeply its ethos may have penetrated his being, he regards himself as its servant, and his sufferings as witnessing to its permanent objectivity. Jesus had no "cause" in this sense. He evidently conceived that His death was not a human tribute to the truth about Ultimate

Reality, but that He was, in fact, Ultimate Reality come amongst men.

This, manifestly, is in harmony with the orthodox doctrine of Incarnation; and it must be observed that if that doctrine be doubted, all the profoundest depths are removed from our conception of what was involved at Calvary. It is bound to make an enormous difference, whether we believe that God was never more than a compassionate spectator of the Cross, or that He Himself was nailed upon it: a difference which will ultimately affect our view of God and the universe; and to suppose that the sufferings of a fellow-man, however noble and beautiful, can mean for us as much as the sufferings of God Incarnate, or can possess a meaning within the same category as that which is provided by the faith that the Eternal Son of God was crucified for men, is to exhibit either short-sightedness or insincerity. Nevertheless, to declare that it was God Incarnate who suffered the shame and pain of the Cross, does not necessarily explain how, by this action, an inestimable boon was wrought for the human race. To behold the Divine Holiness seized upon by brutal hands and cruelly treated must always be an overwhelming spectacle, and the perceived fact, without any theory, may and often does exert a stupendous recreating influence within the soul. But if the mind is entitled to inquire concerning any doctrine of the Faith, it is entitled to ask questions about this; and the devout Christian mind, always confessing that any theory must be inadequate, has nevertheless sought from age to age to find some enlightenment upon this problem.

Assuming that what happened upon the Cross happened to the Eternal Son of God, it has been found possible, broadly, to follow either of two lines of interpretation: to say either that the death of Christ was an act accomplished in time in order somehow to *affect* the transcendent purpose of God; or that the death of Christ was an act accomplished in time to *express* the transcendent purpose of God. It may be at once admitted that both views can find some support in the New Testament; but it is not without significance that it was the former, the view that Jesus died to render God's forgiveness possible, that early gained the greater ascendancy. The explanation that this was due to forensic modes of thought is not to be accepted without reservation, for what prompted the application of forensic thought to the theological problem of Atonement was that profound sense of the catastrophe and awful guilt of human sin which the Cross itself had produced.

As Anselm stated the *rationale* of Atonement, sin had involved mankind in an infinite debt, which only man ought to pay, but which only God could pay; and salvation could be achieved only by the identification of God with man, and by His offering, in and through human nature, the infinite recompense for human sin. It may be said that the argument of *Cur Deus Homo* employs forms of thought which are fundamentally legalistic; but it was an attempt to express, within such forms, the perception that the sufferings of Christ at Calvary were necessitated by the nature of God and by the sins

of man. Unfortunately, certain developments of theology, and particularly of Reformation theology, laid stress so exclusively upon the nature of God as necessitating the Cross, as to lead to a crude tritheism, and to the tacit assumption of a contrariety of will within the Blessed Trinity. The Father was all righteous anger and the Son was all pity ; and the Cross, the only satisfaction which outraged Deity could accept, was endured by the Son, who is thus regarded as the sole Originator of human salvation—a conception utterly repugnant to intelligent faith, and quite astray from Catholic theology.

On the other hand, the view which arose by way of reaction against the crudeness and unethical character of this distortion, the view that the Cross was endured by Christ as a mode of expressing the unbounded goodwill of God, and His unqualified desire for the salvation of men : that the Passion was an event in time intended, not in any way to affect God, but to express the transcendent purpose of God, has also its shortcomings. There can be no question that its rise has been accompanied by a lessened insistence upon the dread, tragic and desolating effects of sin in the universe. Moreover, it does not sufficiently account for that element of awful mystery in our Lord's death, an element strongly suggested in the New Testament, and of which our Lord Himself appears to have been conscious. Upon the assumption that He was about to express the full measure of divine compassion for a ruined world, and to suffer a few hours of physical torture in order to enlighten men's minds concerning God's love for them, and

that nothing more was involved, the appalling stress of His agony at Gethsemane, His terrific struggle to accept the "cup," and His lonely cry upon the Cross, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" are simply inexplicable. Many a martyr has faced his hour of trial apparently with fewer qualms; and not a few men and women, even to-day, could they believe that by being crucified they would attract the world to God, would endure the physical suffering with grim but unwavering assurance.

Where there thus appears contradiction between the speculations of the profoundest Christian thinkers: where there appears to be inadequacy in the attempts of the best and most devout teachers to provide a consistent and exhaustive account of the real moving causes of the Passion of our Lord, it were the height of folly and presumption for any ordinary person to undertake the task. There is no such intention in the mind of the present writer. The most that one can do is to express sincerely his own thoughts; and since the Atonement is so central in the Christian Faith, possibly the approach to a fuller understanding of its process will be made by way of applying its facts, and the generally accepted doctrines founded upon them, to the various realms of human concern, freely using the concepts and terminology of those realms, in the hope that at long last some rich and potent synthesis will be reached. Here we are to deal with the implications of Atonement for the structure of human society, and at least it may be urged that this will probably lead us as near to its central realities, as any other line of inquiry.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE ATONEMENT

If Christian theology is a self-consistent conception of God and the universe, and not a mere collection of unrelated assertions, one principle must immediately be accepted. The Person who died upon the Cross was divine: the originating source of His action was therefore divine. Operating within human nature, and within this world's visible history, He nevertheless carries forward what is primarily a motive of God. The fundamental New Testament declaration, in the light of which all others are to be understood, is that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." This at once forbids those crude substitutionary theories of Atonement which have represented the sufferings of Christ as winning man's salvation from an unwilling Deity; but it does not warrant the assumption that the only motive of the Passion was to wring the hearts of men with sympathetic grief. God may well have been in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, and yet the Passion may have been necessitated by some principle within the nature of Absolute Being, to which our Lord's sufferings must have objective reference. An objective element in Atonement does not necessarily involve a clash of purpose within the Godhead, or any sort of tritheism. The Cross may have been the work of God, the instrument of God, and yet may have looked, as it were, toward God as well as toward mankind. The instinctive perception of such an element has never been entirely obliterated from the Christian consciousness, not even when men have revolted from naïve and unworthy attempts to express it. It is not necessary to suppose that the

Passion made God willing to forgive men: that is an unchristian notion; but it is quite possible to believe that without the Passion, or at least without the divine will to immense suffering being made manifest amongst men, God could not have declared forgiveness and remained God.

In order to see the real ground of this argument, we need to return to the Christian conception of God as being within Himself perfectly social. And if we assert that at Calvary Christ was carrying into expression a motive of God, it was more than the motive of a solitary personal unit. In the first place, He was upholding, within this earthly sphere, the law of the life of the Blessed Trinity, and setting forth in circumstances quite hostile the root and basis of all spiritual existence. The Passion declares that society within God is sacrificial, eternally sustained by the mutual self-giving of its Persons. It thus becomes in this world the final revelation of the eternal nature of God; and it thereby reveals the actual position of man upon the natural plane by exhibiting the awful contrast between his standards and those of the divine Reality.

That the Cross is the supreme revelation of God is, of course, held by those who see in it nothing more than a simple and direct act of forgiveness, an attempt to move the hearts of men by showing what incidental suffering divine love is willing to undergo in order to reach them. But, in the nature of the case, the act must have a more complex reference than this; for if the Cross be the supreme revelation of God, and we bear in mind the mysterious agony

of our Lord in contemplating it, we can only conclude that it reveals God as willing to forgive men at an almost inconceivable cost: a cost which our Lord Himself appears to have regarded as something terrific and indeed appalling. It is this element in the revelation of the Cross which is neglected by purely "subjective" theories. The full understanding of it is not granted to us. We know it is present, we are moved and shaken by the consciousness of its dread import, we dimly apprehend that it involves something of profound significance for the life of God; but it is this reference toward God which surpasses our powers of definition. Yet, here and there, we may see a little light, and we have now to suggest some considerations which such light seems to make more or less clear.

The problem of man's reconciliation with God is not stated with theological accuracy when it is changed into a problem of God's reconciliation with men, if that be taken to mean that God's love toward man ceased with the emergence of human sin, and somehow had to be reawakened. Yet, from our point of view, there is, in a sense, a problem of God's reconciliation with men. The whole difficulty is one of the reconciliation of the social with the unsocial: of the perfectly communal and co-operative life of the Blessed Trinity with the self-centred and self-seeking life of human societies. Now, Christian theology, in its doctrine of Incarnation and Atonement, declares that with Christ's entrance into this world the divine life of mutual sacrifice was projected *into a previously unexperienced relation.* No

doubt the creation of the universe was a flowing forth of divine love; but the natural world was not capable of sharing the divine communion until man appeared. It was sustained by divine love, but was unconscious of its own significance; and it is still so sustained, in spite of man's sin, and the sun shines upon the unjust. But a new factor has entered—the misdirection of the human will, the distortion of personality to unsocial ends, the sin which is opposed to the very principle of creation, disruptive, separative, seeking to erect the isolated self as the end of self's activity. Thus, man has put himself out of communion with God: his own societies are imperfect, chaotic, constantly coming to decay or to swift collapse; the world is filled with strife, stained with blood, made hideous by cruelty—cruelty and strife entirely different from those of "nature red in tooth and claw," since man is created for conscious, immediate fellowship with God, and nature is not. The problem is, therefore, How may the Perfect Society of the Divine Being restore social relations with the broken and anarchic life of man, in which personality and society have become opposed and fellowship marred and crippled: how may that which is essentially and completely social come into social ties with that which has broken the social bond and thus placed itself beyond the spiritual pale?

The doctrine that God was incarnate in Christ is the doctrine that there was a motion of the perfect society of Deity into the shattered and unsocial life of this world; and stated thus, it will be seen to

involve the conception that the principle of utter, unimpeded self-giving, as the basis of spiritual communion, hitherto confined within the blissful harmony of God, was extended through a divine Person into the human race; and that whereas such divine self-giving had in all eternity been answered by divine self-giving, it was now to bear, in personal relations, the unprecedented contradiction of sinners. Eternally the ground of personal and social existence within the Trinity, it was now to be visibly set forth at all risks amongst men, who would deny it and drive it from their midst with bitter jests; and it was to be set forth that its very humiliation might become the means of their salvation. If this supreme and all-surpassing act of love—whereby sacrifice becomes now not only the answer to sacrifice, but the answer to selfishness, and holiness speaks face to face, not only with holiness, but with brutality, pride and vice—if this supreme and revolutionary act moves not men, nothing can. But possibly it is just this unprecedented traffic of love with hate that is the terrible and world-shaking element in the Passion. It is this, perhaps, which is the awful cost, immeasurable by created minds—that violent hands should at last be laid, as it were, upon the central citadel of life, and that God should be betrayed and smitten as men betray and smite one another. This may go a little way to account for our Lord's agonized shrinking in the garden. He was to carry the divine principle to an untried issue: He was to place it in a hitherto unexperienced relation. "This," said Jesus, to

those who came to arrest Him, "is your hour, and the power of darkness." Modern philosophies of the Absolute, of course, must deny the very possibility of such an interpretation. All static pantheism will find it incredible to suppose that God could enter into a *new* experience. But Christian thought which assumes a distinction between God and man, between eternity and history, and asserts that sin is a catastrophic reality, finds no difficulty in such conceptions as we have now outlined.

Here, moreover, we discover something of the nature of the objective element in our Lord's Passion. Those theories which regard its reference as purely to mankind, seem often to emphasize "the joy that was set before Him" so exclusively as to banish all thought of the pain and shame of which our Lord was very conscious. They can find no place for that mysterious factor from which He seemed to shrink in loathing. Yet the surrender of the eternal, communal love into the hands of pride and hate must be accomplished—only thus could men learn what God is and what sin is: and this humiliation, this unprecedented torture of purity by impurity, this bowing of the will to fellowship, in death and disaster, before the onslaught of the will to self—this dark and inconceivable anguish —is a debt paid, and necessarily paid to the Divine purpose of man's salvation.

It has to be remembered that Catholic theology has refused to allow that God the Father suffered at the Cross. The Cross was endured by One who still stood within the communal life of God, but

who nevertheless was passing through a *new* experience in the conditions of Incarnation. Upon Him fell the brunt and horror of that experience. And thus, Christ offered Himself, not to Deity unwilling to forgive, but to Deity rushing with overwhelming force of love to man's salvation, but with such purpose that He, the incarnate Person, must be delivered into the polluted hands of men. He paid the necessary debt, we may say, not to God's rights, but to the awful demands of God's revolutionary and all-hazarding love. He became the instrument of what may almost be called a degradation of Deity; for in Him, the absolute and perfect social complex which is God, became involved in the effects of human sin. Upon One whose whole Person was compacted in the divine fellowship, there descended the results of mankind's abrogation of fellowship. He did something for God, as well as for man. Men lifted His body upon the Cross. But for God's sake He bowed His spirit to endure the deepest shame that had ever darkened the sun.

The meaning of our Lord's Passion for the individual soul in its relation to God is not difficult to enunciate from such a starting-point. The heart's pride, the will to self, are utterly broken and humbled in the dust, and in that lowly and stricken place a man discovers communion with God Who also has come down thus far. What is seen here is not the mechanical removal of some legally contracted guilt, but a sublime carelessness of love, plunging itself into untold risk and shame, in order to make the soul aware of its true life and able to

tread its only way. And the acceptance of Christ crucified thus means the acceptance of that very love, in its supreme self-revelation by self-abasement, as the soul's supreme motive: which no doubt was partly what St Paul meant when he spoke of being crucified with Christ. Therefore the Cross becomes the foundation of a new ethic, a new sanction of conduct, revolutionary, unworldly, divine.

We have, however, all along insisted that the individual cannot be treated as a complete entity in isolation; and we have argued that the full explication of his communion with God will appear only within a redeemed society: that is to say, within a society consolidated by the operation, within its members, of that motive which brought Christ to the Cross. Such a society will obviously be a full fellowship of co-operation. Rejecting a natural basis, it discovers its beginning and end in the invisible; but there it finds, not the remote and static Idea of Plato, but a flaming Heart and a mighty Will, the life of the living God who can create society because He is society, and who can bind up broken communions because He is prepared to give Himself and His own social life in sacrifice for sinners. This is the Catholic and Evangelical social foundation, and to suppose that it is to have no effect upon politics and commerce, and upon the organization of industry, is merely to trifle.

A society thus founded can brook no strife, no selfish competition, no search for personal advantage, no criteria of personal gain and reward amongst its people. It involves consummate mutual trust and

fidelity, covering the whole area of human activity. It must transcend all national and class distinctions, and positively affect them so that they become means of varied but equally honourable service for the common good. All this is plain enough. But we now approach a far more difficult problem, one which the Church has found peculiarly baffling and which has caused much divergence in the thought of Christian men. Unfortunately it has been met, only too often, by a surrender of the Ethic of Atonement. This immense problem is that of the presence of evil amongst men, still threatening the forces of the good, and able to resort to means prohibited to the communal will. A Christian society, it is felt, would run enormous risks in such a world as this. How is Christ's fellowship to defend itself against those who persist in adopting the standards of selfishness and material gain, and the use of force to secure their ends? How is a society, pledged to regard Christ's voluntary sacrifice at the hands of sinners as the revelation of Ultimate Reality, to maintain itself amidst men who threaten its material destruction? Founded upon invisible truth and energized by spiritual forces, it is yet in this world as a visible corporation, and therefore assailable from without by those antagonisms which have spoiled and maimed human life from the beginning.

Mr Hilaire Belloc, concluding his volume, *Europe and the Faith*, declares that "The Faith is Europe and Europe is the Faith."[1] His conception of Christendom is of a cohesive tradition of culture

[1] *Europe and the Faith*, p. 331.

practically confined to certain parts of the European continent. He sees this almost as a besieged fortress, and glories in the military prowess by which it has preserved its identity. Christendom, for him, has about it "the quality of a soldier." Had its military institutions failed in the struggles against Mohammedan and Pagan invasions, "our civilization would have been wiped out." "It was saved by the sword and by the intense Christian ideal which nerved the sword-arm."[1] Thus Mr Belloc has no doubt as to the answer which must be given to the question we are now considering. And, indeed, it is a general and widespread assumption that, although a Christian society may not seek aggrandizement by the sword, it yet has a clear right, and in fact a duty, to defend itself by force, seeing that if it fails to do this, its extinction will be accomplished and the world thus impoverished of its influence and witness.

Now, in all this, there seems to be considerable confusion of thought. The deductions may be sound common sense: the premiss may be mad; but the deductions do not follow from the premiss. The Ethic of Incarnation and Atonement belongs to a world entirely apart from this religious militarism. In the first place, as is well known, it is not always easy or even possible to distinguish between war of defence and war of attack. So-called Christian nations have filled modern history with the story of their colonial conquests, which certainly, for the most part, have the appearance of

[1] *Europe and the Faith*, pp. 226, 227.

wars of aggression; but these are defended upon the ground that colonial possessions are necessary for the existence of certain nations. In the same way the German militarists were wont to argue that a German conquest of Europe was necessary for the continued existence of Germany. Colonizing nations assure themselves that their culture, being superior, will bless the conquered peoples. Likewise the Germans believed that Europe would live to bless the day when she had been thoroughly Germanized. Moreover, it is always a temptation to defend oneself by getting in the first blow, as Bacon understood when he said, "There is no question but a just fear of danger, though there be no blow given, is a lawful cause of a war." But even granting that there have been occasions when communities have taken up arms for no other purpose than to repel an entirely unprovoked attack, and not also in order to chastise a rival who has provided them with an opportunity, the question still remains as to whether this is an appropriate method of defence for a society within which the Atonement of Christ is the central sanction.

Mr Belloc declares that had the military institutions of Christendom failed against the Norsemen, or against Islam, our civilization would have been "wiped out"; and this is a definite assumption that Christian fellowship, which is presumably the root of that civilization, can in the last resort be preserved only by force. It is, of course, quite easy to speak of the "intense Christian ideal which nerved the sword-arm," and thus to explain the military

successes of the Christian armies by their Christianity ; but whereas some would throw doubt upon the Christianity of certain doughty warriors of the Dark Ages, the present writer prefers to explain their victories by the simple facts that they were better fighters than their enemies, and that they were fighting for their homes. No doubt they hated the thought of Thor or Mohammed striking down the standards of the Cross, and fought with furious energy to prevent such an end ; but that in itself does not prove that they were acting precisely in the spirit of the Cross.

There is just one consideration which reduces to absurdity the whole contention that military activity is necessary to preserve the existence of the Christian Faith ; and it is simply that the Christian Faith, without a weapon in its hand, proscribed and abominably persecuted, made its way in the world and turned a pagan empire into Christendom. And had other pagans overrun the Christian lands with fire and sword, overturned the rising Christian institutions, since the Christian Faith is for all men, it is at least conceivable that it would have survived to convert the conquerors, and Christendom would have risen again, enriched and ennobled. It is even arguable that the conversion of the world would have proceeded more rapidly than by the means actually adopted. The assumption that those who enjoyed the blessings of the Faith were under an obligation to kill their enemies, because those enemies were less important than they for the future of the world, did nothing to reconcile those enemies

to the Faith. Christendom took the sword and drove back the armies of Islam; but it has never converted Islam. It stemmed the march of the pagan North; but it is sometimes said that the North fell away from the Catholic Faith because it never was very Christian.

Against this view, it may be suggested that an institution or a society which has been created by God, as we believe the Christian fellowship to have been created, must surely be defended by men with all the powers at their command. But there immediately arises the question as to whether it is even *possible* to defend the Christian Faith by the sword. In the first place it must be pointed out that there is simply no guarantee that a Christian community which takes up arms against a pagan enemy will thereby preserve its own material existence. Christian communities have fought, and have sometimes been effectively destroyed. Therefore it is idle to speak of "defending" what God has created, as though our armed defence were a sure pledge of its preservation. If it has to depend upon force, then in this world there is certainly a risk of its destruction. And in the second place we have to ask whether, when a Christian people has destroyed an enemy, it has really proved the spiritual right of its society to survive. Has it, by the employment of force, tested its spiritual basis against that of its antagonist? Is this action, toward the unsocial will of the enemy, of the quality of God's action at Calvary? We are now speaking of self-defence. There certainly does seem to be some reflection of the

Cross in the corporate action of a nation which risks its existence in an armed attempt to prevent a strong oppressor from perpetrating injustice upon a weak and defenceless people. Many Englishmen took arms, sorely against their own instincts, not for the sake of killing Germans, but for the hope of saving Belgium. Chivalry, whatever may be said of its methods, is beautiful in motive, and there were thousands of young Englishmen who fought in Flanders with a holy dream in their hearts. Yet, after all, the problem was to save the soul of Germany as well as the body of Belgium, and it is questionable how far our imitation of German methods was effective for that end.

It certainly is appalling to contemplate the prospect of a highly civilized nation bowing its head before the onset of a fierce foe, and being ground into the dust amidst circumstances of wild cruelty and misery, though there is no guarantee that it will avoid either the cruelty or the misery by fighting. Certainly, if it fights, there will be cruelty practised upon both sides; and with almost equal certainty, the motive and purpose of the innocent people will, in the process of war, tend to sink to the level of those of the enemy. This is a fairly constant feature of war. But whether the actual experience of a nation which had possessed the miraculous courage to meet invasion with non-resistance would be so frightful as some prophesy, remains to be seen. If Britain had suddenly disarmed in August 1914, possibly her lot would have been terrible for a time, for Germany would probably have inter-

preted the action as the result of cowardly panic; but had the action really been one of sincere and splendid courage, like the courage of Christ going to the Cross, it is possible that the condition of Europe would now be more hopeful than it has been for many centuries, and possibly the suffering entailed would have been even less than was actually incurred in the war. Such argument, we know, must seem simple madness to those who view the natural world as the supreme reality; but that is not our assumption. We are proceeding here upon the faith that Christ crucified is the revelation of the roots of the universe. And what His Passion means in respect of the problem we are now discussing is not difficult to understand, though it will require a supernatural courage to practise.

If our conception of Atonement contain truth, there is only one ultimate way of dealing with an enemy, and that is to seek his incorporation within the blessed communion of God. And, apparently, in the last resort, there is only one method whereby this can be accomplished. The utterly self-giving, sacrificial nature of that communion must be set forth before the enemy who will not prize it, who will scorn it and trample upon it—for a time. This is what Christ did at Calvary. Is there any other consistent plan for those who have been baptized into His death? It is a complete reversal of this world's methods. It transcends the whole plane of "rights" and "duties." It announces the willingness of the Christian society to die, with Christ, for the very people who are killing it. And if a society has been

co-ordinated in the faith that in Christ has been revealed the method of God's approach to men : if that society beholds Christ, the scourged and crucified, as the Foundation of its existence, it cannot hope to maintain that existence by behaving toward the enemies of God in a manner differing widely from the divine method. If that society takes the sword in order to defend its right to exist as against some menacing rival, it is theoretically abandoning its first principle and is descending to the natural order. And if it be argued that this is, in practice, a hard necessity, then what is involved is the surrender of the Gospel declaration that Christ is rightful Lord of all.

It may, however, be contended that the situation of our Lord at Calvary, and the situation of His society, faced with foes in this world, are not identical, seeing that although He was incarnate and under earthly limitations in His ministry, He was nevertheless consubstantiate with God, always within the Triune Fellowship, and actually gives evidence of a consciousness of His divine relation ; and that His consciousness of transcendent origin and destiny must have made His Passion of less vital import to Him than the prospect of its own destruction must seem to His society. This overlooks the immense anguish which filled His soul at Gethsemane, and takes no account of what we have already said as to its cause—the sacrifice of holy love to the vile and lustful hands of men : the eclipse of divine majesty by brutal human purpose : the traffic of the purely social with the anti-social. This, for our Lord,

must have been a far more piercing pain than any horror that can come to men. But, on the other hand, is the Christian society conscious of no transcendent relation? Is it not committed to the belief that it is better to be Godlike and perish from this mortal scene, than to adopt the world's ways and flourish as the green bay tree? Has it no assurance of a house not made with hands and of "a better country, that is, an heavenly"? Nor is it true to say that this is to place a low value upon earthly existence. The Church which possesses the Sacrament of common bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ, can never rightly treat as a small thing the honourable task of remaining in this world, though it can properly so remain only as Christ's society, ever seeking to reach a more perfect expression of His will, and translating the message of the Sacrament into all the terms of this world's activity. Is this a hopeless dilemma? The common assumption so regards it; but here again the common assumption misses a fundamental factor in the whole adventure of the Cross.

It is true that our Lord died, apparently defeated, upon Calvary, amidst the scorn and indifference of men. But that was not the end of the story; nor is it imaginable that He ever conceived that it would be. He believed that by His death He would draw men to Himself. He died in the hope that His defeat was the beginning of miraculous victory. This, we must notice, involved a certain faith in men—the faith that they would not for ever allow His coming into the world and His great sacrifice to lie forgotten

in obscurity and powerlessness. There was that in mankind, even yet, which would come to recognize in Him the Way, the Truth, the Life. And the very fact that the Christian society claims to be of universal adequacy and effect, capable of embodying the entire human race, commits it to this faith in men: that though they may oppose and attempt to destroy it, it is always *possible* that they may eventually find in it their home. Indeed, the spectacle of a society holding fast to the principle of sacrificial goodwill in face of cruel enmity, if this faith be not a phantom, would be of enormous effect. The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church. Moreover, in countless cases of actual fact, the demonstrated willingness to accept the full implications of our Lord's Passion has been sufficient to disarm the enemy, as scores of Christian missionaries have proved when faced by savage and hostile peoples.

These principles may be applied to other problems which arise when the relation of the Christian society with the unchristian world is discussed, and with special cogency to the widely felt difficulty of maintaining Christian standards in the realm of economics. At long last, the Church is finding courage to venture some criticism upon the accepted industrial and commercial tenets of the modern world; and Christian men are beginning faintly to understand that between the methods of industry conducted for private gain as an end, and the teaching of our Lord, there is opposition. If there were at present existing in the world a compact economic society wholly Christian in spiritual intention, it might not

be difficult to institute therein some form of genuine economic co-operation ; but in modern conditions that would not finally dispose of the ethical problem. The world has become organized as an economic unit, with each quarter of the globe dependent upon the others. If Europe, realizing what Mr Belloc believes to be the truth of its existence, were to become once again a visible and coherent embodiment of Christian principles, if it were to become Christian in fact as well as in name, and were to substitute for capitalist economics a system more closely related to the Gospel, it would yet remain only a portion of the world, and would presumably have still to deal with external communities whose economic principles were unchristian and who sought material gain as their only commercial end. This might conceivably jeopardize the existence of Christendom as effectively as any military attack, and it would seem logical, from Mr Belloc's point of view, that the Christian community should pay its economic enemies in their own coin : that is to say, Christian men would behave as Christians amongst themselves, and as materialists towards non-Christians. At all events, the Christian society would have to face the ethical problem in economics—the problem which the individual Christian has to face to-day, in the vague, pseudo-paganism of our modern life.

Now, it must be observed that this dilemma is hardly so poignant as that of Christianity and war, because in all economic and industrial transaction, short of sheer swindling, there is at least some ex-

change of benefits, even though the exchange be disproportionate and the system as a whole be wrong. Therefore it would be foolish to ask any man to sit still and starve because he perceives that he can feed himself only by engaging in a commercial organization which is not based upon a supernatural ethic. Our Lord Himself took no such attitude. Giovanni Papini declares that Jesus never touched money.[1] This is guesswork, and improbable guesswork; but the notion is at all events futile, since He ate and drank, and wore clothes, which must have involved some acceptance of those economic processes of which money is a symbol. Yet no man can read the Gospels without understanding that our Lord's Person and message involve the transformation of the system of "rights" and "gain" into a system of co-operation in mutual service. But it is certain that the attempt to effect that transformation must involve material risk, for the Christian individual within a mammon-worshipping society, as for a Christian society in a pagan world. There is upon every man who owns Christ as Lord an onus to set his face against the economic evils of his time, even at the risk of personal loss. But, obviously, a clear Christian conscience concerning economics would cause a combination of Christian men for economic purposes; and they would combine, not in classes, but in one corporation of life in which the whole implications of our Lord's Incarnation and Atonement would receive their due manifestation.

In other words, there emerges the need for the

[1] *The Story of Christ* (English Edition), p. 211.

Church to become more than a means of worship. She will have to turn her attention to the task of embodying the full ethic of Christ amongst her people. She will have to recover from her modern shyness, and bring her sons and daughters together in the practical labour of weaving, mining, ploughing, building, teaching. If it is a tragedy and a disgrace that men who name the same Lord in reverence should find themselves, by the rivalries of earthly States, arrayed against each other upon fields of slaughter, it is also tragic and disgraceful that they should be divided by the antagonistic interests of classes. If there is any reality in the Gospel of God sacrificing for the unworthy, if it is possible for men to be moved and controlled by such a story, then their consolidation in Christ must eventually govern all their relations, as it must govern their relations with the non-Christian world.

The Cross is either a bygone incident, or it is the measure of all things. It was either the personal tragedy of an amiable though somewhat mysterious Jew, or it was the revelation in this world of the foundation of that Eternal Society which is God. In the last resort, this is the only question awaiting the modern world's decision. The leaders of thought at the height of the Middle Ages proposed to accept the Christian revelation as the rock upon which the house of life was to be built; but the world flinched from the implications and we have seen it floundering heavily in the sands. It seemed then, as it still seems to many, reasonable to have a religion, but madness to act upon it. But if a nation

which should answer insults with goodwill and gentle speech, and if an employer who should share his business and his profits with his workers, are to be accounted examples of lunacy, at least we must be sufficiently logical to say that the cosmic lunatic is that God Who was rich and for our sakes became poor, and prayed, with His dying breath, for those who nailed Him to a bloody and shameful tree.

VIII

THE IMPLICATIONS OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

We have argued that Plato was profoundly right in his belief that the task of social consolidation must involve, for its success, some notion of the character of Ultimate Reality ; and we have attempted to show that the Christian conception of Ultimate Reality logically indicates a certain method of approach to the problem of human association, and desiderates a particular quality of social structure. At the foundation of all contingent existence is a mode of Being which is essentially and equally Social and Personal, and the Christian doctrine of God therefore assumes that personality can find itself only in fellowship, and that society can live only through the ethical and spiritual expression of personality. The Incarnation involves the conception of universal human solidarity, and our Lord's teaching proclaims the necessity of the co-operative will, acting upon material means for spiritual ends. The Atonement reveals the finally determinative method of the social will, opposed and menaced by the will to self. The dogmas in which such faith is stated are thus not only statements of schematic conceptions of the

universe, but become, when rightly interpreted, canons of practical behaviour. But Christian dogma is not an immediate revelation. That is to say, it was not directly produced in the mind of man from supernatural sources, but is rather an intellectual formulation which is the outcome of concrete life and experience, and the result of a prior contact of the Christian soul and the Christian society with certain realities, some historical, some permanently invisible. We must therefore go behind the dogmatic statements of the Faith, so far as that is possible, to the Christian experience itself, in order to test the conclusions we have reached ; but always bearing in mind that normal Christian experience is of such nature that it has historically expressed itself in those dogmas.

It is not necessary, in this place, to discuss at length the bearings of certain *dicta* of the new psychology upon this subject,[1] for it is already clear that in the attempt to discredit religious experience some leading exponents of the new psychology have resorted to thoroughly illogical and fantastic expedients. They have ceased to be psychologists, inasmuch as they have ventured to pass judgment upon the value of the experience with which they deal. This is the work of philosophy, for which they cannot be said to display very brilliant qualifications. Moreover, the assumption that any reasoned

[1] For two excellent discussions of the bearings of modern psychology upon the question of the validity of Christian Experience see *Christian Experience and Psychological Processes*, by Rouse and Miller; and *Is Christian Experience an Illusion?* by H. Balmforth. Both published by the Student Christian Movement.

conclusion may, or perhaps must, have an infra-rational, psychological cause, cuts beneath the validity of all psychological science, as well as of Christian theology, unless that infra-rational cause may be supposed to reside in some contact with Ultimate Reality more trustworthy than reason. But if we are to discount reason, there seems to be no convincing proof that Professors Freud and Jung are closer to Ultimate Reality than were St Francis and St Theresa. Indeed, the only possible test would be a pragmatic one, and upon that ground there can be no doubt as to how the verdict would lie. For with the decline of personal religious life in the modern period, with the wide abandonment of the belief in saintship as the supreme human achievement, certain well-marked, but by no means beneficial, results have plainly appeared.

It may seem a paradox, but the reader who has followed our main argument will perceive that it is a perfectly intelligible fact, that the modern decline of personal religious life has been accompanied by the placing of an unbalanced emphasis upon the individual as an isolated unit, in all spheres of secular life. This, at first, may have been a necessary and not unhealthy reaction against a corporate conception of life which had become too rigid and repressive. Without doubt, the Renaissance and the Reformation released forces which had been needlessly imprisoned. It is, however, equally certain that those forces have been allowed to run riot, with the result that the Western world has been unable, whether in the field of secular government,

or in the domain of philosophy and art, to provide any coherent and consolidating order, capable of providing all individuals with a liberalizing environment of cultural fellowship. Such combinations as have emerged have been unconscious of any underlying universal humanity. The rise of European nationalism succeeded in depressing the fact of Christendom almost to the level of pious pretence. The initiation of the class war may destroy not only nationalism, but even the last remnants of the notion of Humanity. But neither national loyalty nor class-consciousness can save a man's soul.

In the second place, we have seen the progress of the dogma of "self-realization," in which the ego is viewed as the sufficient end of its own activity, and not as an element in the realization of the common good. This possibly may be traced to the Kantian teaching that man is an end in himself. As Kant presented that teaching, it was a noble protest in behalf of human freedom; but set amidst a philosophy of individualism it was bound to produce disaster: and the setting had been already prepared by Reformation theology. Unless the lesson of the solidarity of the race has been learned, the conception of the individual as an end in himself must necessarily lead to Nietzsche and the a-moralists. All the sloughing of the sanctions of domestic morality which we now behold is the last result of the belief that the satisfaction of the individual, considered as an isolated end, is the sole task of life; but the economic effects of that belief have been long established.

With these things, of course, the failure of personal religion has also conjoined assent to the notorious positivism of the modern outlook, which has now produced signs of bankruptcy throughout the whole world of secular culture. The ideal of material wealth has probably become more generally accepted in this age than at any other period of the Christian era. In company with individualism and the dogma of "self-realization" as we have described it, the pursuit of "success" has erected a kind of moral code and almost a religion of Mammon. There is no longer much hypocrisy about the pursuit of money and the advantages which wealth can secure. We scarcely think it necessary to pretend to be doing anything else. The getting of gain is set forth as one of the supreme duties which a man owes to himself; and he who has not succeeded in this is quietly but surely estimated as a failure indeed. One conspicuous effect of this is that the masses of the poor, possibly quite as ready as the rich to burn incense in the temple of Mammon, are being taught to turn the political discussion into a purely economic discussion; and if the ideals of human life remain what they are to-day, and the poor do not get the better of the argument, the resort to other and more disastrous methods may yet be made in places far away from Russia.

Such are some of the effects of the decline of religious experience. When men no longer meet one another upon a supernatural plane, they discover always the absence of any natural tie sufficiently strong to resist the destructive influences of their

self-love. Thus, again, we are brought to see that the only permanent social foundation must be found in the contact of men with a supernatural order. The Christian religion claims to provide this, and the claim is endorsed by a vast and agelong testimony, of which the chief characteristics are clear and constant. It is the implications of this Christian experience that we are now to consider. In modern Christianity religious experience is discovered by two methods, the Evangelical and the Sacramental. These two great modes of spiritual life are unnaturally divorced, because of the confusion which modern developments have cast upon Christian thought ; but we shall find that the practical conclusions to be drawn from Evangelical and Sacramental experience are by no means contrary or diverse. Both principles minister to the needs of a race whose broken and devastated fellowship is a standing outrage upon that social harmony which is of the very Being of God.

It is customarily taken for granted that the Evangelical presentation of the Christian religion is concerned in a special, and indeed exclusive, manner with the individual soul. If this is true, it simply proves that the Evangelical mode is an incomplete presentation of the Faith. But for the moment, we may take the typical Evangelical experience, which sits rather loosely to the notion of the Church as a fundamental necessity, and has perhaps little use for sacraments except as stimulants to subjective feeling, and we may attempt to draw the social implications which reside in that experi-

ence, however unsuspected by the religious individualist.

To begin with, the Gospel assumes that a man's life is contingent upon the energy of infinite, creative Love. He owes his creation and continued existence to the ever-watchful care of that overshadowing Providence, without whose knowledge not a sparrow falls to the ground. His life is contingent and dependent. He is neither uncaused nor self-caused, but actually produced beneath the beneficent light of the sun by a Cause which is well-disposed toward him. Christian orthodoxy knows nothing of the speculation that creation was necessary for God, for that notion would destroy belief in grace as a fundamental factor in God's relation to our human existence. The birth of the universe, according to Christian philosophy, was due to God's overflowing generosity: and thus man's very existence is a product of divine grace. Furthermore, a man's opportunities are largely created for him. The innate qualities and powers of personality may be developed, but they are beyond the ability of conscious human volition to create. They are derived, mediately, no doubt, but ultimately, from the generosity of the Creator. That, at any rate, is the conception of the Gospel. "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?" We are all in debt from the first.

There is no religion in which this consciousness of the derivation of human existence from the unnecessitated act of God receives profounder acknowledgment than it does in Christianity. Pro-

fessor Rudolf Otto has done a service to the cause of clear thinking in his book, *The Idea of the Holy*, in which he discovers the beginning of religious experience in the consciousness of a completely "other," a consciousness which he designates by the word "numinous." And although he shows how the judgment of sublimity shadows forth our ineffable awareness of the transcendent and "other," and how numinous consciousness involves the sense of "awfulness," "overpoweringness," and terrific energy and urgency, he yet places in the forefront of his account of religious experience the element of "creature-feeling."[1] He adopts this term to distinguish his conception from the less emphatic "feeling of dependence" of Schleiermacher, for he holds that the numinous consciousness involves more than a sense of dependence, and carries us to the soul-quelling conviction that our existence is utterly contingent upon some Other than self: that we are the sheer products of an activity not our own, and absolutely prior to and distinct from ourselves. This, we may well believe, is involved in all genuine religious feeling as distinct from mere religiosity, and we have to repeat that in Christian experience it is more emphatically marked than elsewhere.

The Christian Faith assumes and surpasses the Hebrew thought of God in which the sense of human creatureship received many wonderful expressions. Otto quotes very effectively the words of Abraham, "Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes";[2] and he

[1] *The Idea of the Holy*, pp. 9 ff. [2] Genesis xviii. 27.

refers to certain well-known passages in Isaiah and the Book of Job, as illustrating the numinous apprehension of man's nothingness before God. The Christian joy in God's fellowship, springing from the Incarnation, really loses nothing of the sense of *mysterium tremendum* and its accompanying consciousness of creatureship. Our Lord declared that the hairs of our heads are all numbered—an assurance comforting and yet strangely disquieting since it suggests that even our self-knowledge is shallow and trifling compared with God's knowledge of us. A great deal of His teaching was deliberately calculated to cover all human pride and self-assurance with confusion. The supreme prayer that man can pray is that God's will may be done on earth. Indeed, so utterly dependent upon God are we, so entirely derivative is our being, that when we have done all, we are to call ourselves unprofitable servants, seeing that we can never advance one step of the way to paying our original debt.

One great characteristic of Christian experience is the joy which the heart finds, even in its reverential awe and trembling, in accepting life and all its potentialities as an entirely undeserved gift from God. This springs forth in the prayer and praise of the Church in age after age, and this it was that found lovely utterance in St Francis' "Canticle of the Sun"—

> Praised be my Lord God with all His creatures, and specially our brother the sun, who brings us the day and who brings us the light; fair is he and shines

with a very great splendour: O Lord, he signifies to us Thee!

Praised be my Lord for our sister the moon, and for the stars, the which He has set clear and lovely in heaven.

Praised be the Lord for our brother the wind, and for air and cloud, calms and all weather by the which Thou upholdest life in all creatures.

Praised be the Lord for our sister water . . . for our brother fire . . . for our mother the earth . . . for all those who pardon one another for His love's sake.

Praised be my Lord for our sister, the death of the body . . .

Praise ye and bless the Lord, and give thanks unto Him and serve Him with great humility.

The enormous paradox of the Faith is, of course, that while it increases man's sense of indebtedness, fundamental and inescapable, since it declares that God created him from the pure motive of love, it nevertheless establishes between creature and Creator a fellowship in which the creature is not absorbed (as in some doctrines of mystical union he is said to be) but is preserved in a divine comradeship. This presupposes a permanent communion between Creator and creature, and thus a permanent ground for the creature's praise, adoration, unreserved devotion—a communion which is felt and realized by the Christian as the most precious fact of his life, and presumably regarded as the basis of all his action.

To this, however, it may be replied that we do not actually enter into fellowship thus entirely divested of worth created by ourselves: that at least, having

received our personal existence with its inherited powers, we may claim some degree of standing and credit, inasmuch as we have employed them, cultivated and developed them in practice. But Evangelical experience knows nothing of such a plea. It lives in a different world. For the Christian, the question has arisen, To what ends, for what purposes, have I utilized my powers ? When the soul thus begins with clear eyes to gaze upon itself, it discovers a spectacle not unlike the famous painting of Mona Lisa—that inscrutable face from which, as one beholds, the calm smile of purity sometimes seems to pass, revealing depths of treacherous insincerity. When Cardinal Manning was elevated to the Archiepiscopate of Westminster, he went into retreat, and recorded in his diaries the course of his self-examination. He therein declared that when he came to analyse *any one action* of his past life, he was self-condemned, and desired to hide himself from himself.[1] The soul enters into Christian experience only in one way. Reviewing itself and its whole activity, it must cry, " God be merciful to me a sinner." Nor does this self-conviction disappear with spiritual progress. The greatest Christian saints are most surely convinced of the enormity of their own sin ; and thus man is in the paradoxical position that in his greatest spiritual advances he becomes only the more aware of his utter dependence upon the mercy of God. For the supreme answer of the spirit of man to the question of man's worthiness, according to the Evangelical testimony, is the

[1] Mentioned in Shane Leslie's biography of Manning.

admission that he is such a creature as has involved God Himself in the Sacrifice of Calvary.

Evangelical experience, then, assumes that human well-being is ultimately no product of human effort, but the result of the stupendous generosity of God; and it must be remarked here that this estimate of man's position is reached much more certainly in orthodox theology than in those forms of Modernism whereof the Christology savours of Adoptionism. If our Lord was the finest flower of human development, so surpassingly great in holiness that He actually achieved divinity, He may offer a noble revelation of God—to those who can understand how humanity can pass into Deity; but at all events, what He primarily offers is the spectacle of a wonderful human achievement, of which the divine revelation is the climax. In and through Him, humanity may perhaps come to regard itself as entitled to considerable credit, the source of which is a purely human accomplishment. The outlook of Christian experience, however, is essentially different—

> Nothing in my hand I bring,
> Simply to Thy Cross I cling.

This introduces us to a world of entirely different values. According to the Evangelical view, the revelation of God was something already tremendous when the Babe lay sleeping on Mary's breast, and "He who was rich" had already "for our sakes become poor."

The result is that every man who shares the

Evangelical experience knows himself to be involved in a fundamental indebtedness, which cuts beneath all human achievements, and of which the significance is prior to anything that may be deduced from his own deeds of kindness or sacrifice. Evangelical teaching regards the recognition of this profound indebtedness as of prime necessity for spiritual health. Until a person has given such recognition, he is unaware of the paramount fact of his own situation. In the most fundamental relation of his existence, every man is a beggar; and his utter helplessness has been relieved only by an amazing adventure of generous love, undertaken by God. This is the explanation why not even the purest saint can ever achieve a standing of absolute moral credit. This is the explanation of Christian humility, which is numinous awe deeply charged with ethical penitence. No matter how great a thing a man may do, though he learn to speak with tongues of angels, or give his body to be burned, there is always an infinitely greater thing that has been done for him. He knows that he has cost God Bethlehem and Calvary, and his every prayer, as long as he live, must contain some strain of confession.

The heaviest batteries of the a-moralists have been turned upon the Christian ethic of meekness and humility. It has been described as "slave-morality," unfit for strong men. Yet it is a little curious that an age which has listened to such attacks seems extraordinarily lacking in strong men. The would-be supermen have assumed an appearance of paltriness. The glorification of "strength" has appar-

ently produced a world incapable of managing its own affairs, a world which none but a lunatic can survey with much satisfaction. The superman in industry and *real-politik* has created a situation which is now sending cold shivers down his own spine. But the ordinary man in the street has listened to the attack upon the Christian ethic with some furtive sympathy, not because he believes it to be a "slave-morality," but because, in his less sophisticated state, he knows it to be a revolutionary and searching demand upon himself. A mean-spirited wretch may conceivably turn his cheek to the smiter because he is afraid to hit back; or he may give away both his coat and his cloak because he lacks courage to claim his own. But ordinary common sense knows full well that our Lord was appealing, not to cowardice, but to a certain lofty, adventurous, and scarcely possible courage. And this courage first displays itself in a man's confession that he has no possessions, no powers, no rights which are truly his own. So desperately difficult, so utterly heroic, does the ethic of Jesus seem to most men, that it is a relief to them to hear that some eminent philosophers do not agree with it.

The Christian man, however, knows quite well why our Lord calls for such heroism of self-denial, because he has experience of a redemption which depends upon an act of precisely such moral quality upon the part of God. He knows that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. The basis of Christian morality is the experienced fact of God's grace in the Incarnation and Atonement of Christ;

and although the believer may fall far short, he knows that the only reasonable response to the initial acts of divine grace must be in such an ethic as Jesus Himself taught. He knows that any sort of morality based upon self-confidence is not only imperfect: it is obviously ridiculous. The self in which a man is asked by the a-moralists to trust is not only a small thing, liable at any moment to be driven and broken by the storms of this world; it is also, according to the Christian view, a self which has been disloyal to the supreme cause, has come into shameful conflict with infinite goodness, and whose only title to existence is that Someone is infinitely better and wiser than itself. Consequently, there can be no quarrel with the demand that the only motive of all human activity must be a constant gratitude, a perpetual self-offering. Since the self-offering of God alone could heal the broken fellowship of men, self-offering must become the foundation of the edifice of human society; and the Christian man must admit that the ethical demands of Christ express the only standard of life that a redeemed sinner can reasonably adopt.

This must be so, if Christian experience is experience of absolute Reality. If it is, it must become regulative of conduct in every sphere. The Gospel will touch and transform those who receive it upon the deepest levels and in the profoundest relations of their existence. Unfortunately, however, the assumption is too readily made that the implications of the Gospel can be successfully confined to the deeper and more inward parts of a man's life. They may be sporadically extended to particular situations,

so that a Christian may be expected to make an occasional generous donation to good causes, or to exhibit sympathy and a forgiving spirit in private intercourse; but here the ethics of the Evangelical principle are often supposed to reach the limit of their application. The supposition is, of course, ludicrous, if the evangelical fact is the supreme fact, and if the Saviour God is also the Creator of the world. The true deductions are of much wider scope and more revolutionary significance.

The acceptance of Evangelical experience logically involves collision with the whole social and economic structure which requires that our contribution to the world's well-being shall be based upon reward. Any man who believes that he is fundamentally in debt to start with, must know that the motive of his activity *in any sphere* ought to be nothing other than grateful self-offering. He must know that a system which requires him to advertise and proclaim his own merits, and expects him to sell his services to his fellow-men as dearly as possible: a system which requires him to push himself before his neighbour, and offers the greatest prizes to those who can push hardest, is utterly at variance with the Evangelical principle and a denial of its first assumptions. He must know that the whole category of private gain as the motive of work is the very antithesis of the spiritual attitude demanded by the Gospel. He must see that only by a subtle hypocrisy are men able to recognize themselves as beggars in the sight of God, while straining every nerve to appear as millionaires in the sight of men. They divorce the

affairs of this world from the control of religion, and split themselves into unrelated compartments. The result is that the secular world is in complete confusion, and religion seems unreal. If the Gospel is to be determinative of a man's whole outlook, there is not the slightest doubt that it will cause him to feel the modern economic system as an irksome restraint upon his soul.

He may fear, indeed, that a refusal to accept the sanctions of that system will leave him, and those depending upon him, face to face with ruin; and this is a very present problem with many Christian people to-day. The answer to it can never fully appear in Evangelical religion, until Evangelical experience finds its rightful issue in a sacramental system. Nevertheless, if a man determines to abide by individualistic conceptions of religion, he must understand that Evangelical experience involves for individuals, not glossy prosperity and smug comfort, but a somewhat lonely cross-bearing. Nor may the perception of personal peril prevent him from declaring the contradiction between the Gospel-motive and the motive recognized and accepted as a vital constituent of the present order. The Gospel means, if it means anything, that for a man redeemed from complete damnation only by the stupendous sacrifice of God, to spend his life haggling and chaffering for rewards is simply indecent. The only motive for ordinary work that he can offer to God is the motive of service. The only criterion of reward in such a world as this, must be need. And the system which makes economic gain and economic

merit its chief considerations is under the condemnation of God as making the Cross of Christ of none effect. To say that such conclusions are fantastic and unpractical will trouble no intelligent man whose soul has been touched by the Christian realities; for he will know that the world he now sees is fantastic enough, in all conscience.

Thus the Evangelical principle offers a clear challenge in the field of economic relations. It must be remarked, at this point, that it offers an equal challenge to much of the "evangelical revivalism" which claims to deal only with "souls" and to let politics and economics alone. The full impact of the Gospel upon modern life will never be felt, so long as official religion shrinks from proclaiming the social implications of conversion. It is strange, indeed, if man, so gravely a sinner that God must suffer shame and death for his redemption, and remaining in the mass still impenitent, has yet contrived a system of human relations which is sacrosanct. Is it not much more likely that the modern age, which has notoriously neglected religion, has produced a system which is damnable? Is it probable that while the world of individuals is heedless of God, the structure of society will have respect to God? Precisely how the transition from the present order is to be made may be a matter of debate; but that the Gospel demands some transition of a revolutionary character should be easily apparent to all who believe that God once walked as a poor man upon our earthly roads.

Our discussion of the implications of the Evan-

gelical experience has led us to assert that Evangelical religion needs to discover its rightful issue in a sacramental system. This is only to say, once again, that it is impossible to regard the individual as an isolated entity, and that his salvation will be completely wrought out only as he finds himself in a redeemed fellowship. And since a corporate fellowship of men *must* involve a characteristic approach to that material world which is their common environment, appearing to all eyes and touched by every hand, the Christian fellowship must hold at its heart some definite declaration concerning the relation of the spiritual society with the visible world. What it does say, when it speaks consistently with its own meaning, is that matter is intended to be the vehicle of spirit; and that since the Lord of spirit and matter is none other than Christ, material things are here, in the last resort, to become His expression and embodiment. But since human sin has misapplied all the material resources of the world, it cannot be assumed that the whole world is now, *de facto*, a sacrament. Its complete sacramental meaning has to be established at certain points *within the Chistian Society*, where portions of it are devoted to the purpose of integrating human fellowship in Christ.

It is perhaps necessary to say that Sacramental religion is not an alternative to Evangelical religion; much less is it an inferior substitute, accommodated to the needs of spiritual weaklings. It is the completion of the Evangelical experience. They are not two equally effective methods—it is unthinkable

that the Christian Faith should be thus expressed in two apparently unrelated modes. Sacramental religion includes the Evangelical experience, and requires it, for the simple reason that society cannot exist without the ever-deepening life of persons; but just as society completes personality, so Sacramental religion completes Evangelical experience. And there is a definite Sacramental experience, and a Sacramental ethos, which are not precisely to be identified with the glow of Evangelical ardour, although that is present as an element in them. The Sacramental ethos is of richer complexity, and sustains more direct relations with the consolidation of the Christian tradition in society, in politics, art and letters. That is to say, it is essential to the Catholic presentation of the Faith.

It cannot, indeed, be roundly asserted that Sacramentalists have been, upon the whole, more ready to perceive the true social consequences of their faith, than Evangelicals have been to acknowledge the revolutionary implication of theirs. It is, however, quite arguable that the Sacramentalist has less excuse for his negligence, though the chief cause of confusion has been the totally unnatural and unnecessary divorce and opposition of the two modes. But whereas the Evangelical addresses himself to the individual soul in such a manner as to obscure, at first, the social meaning of the Faith, the Sacramentalist always assumes that the salvation of the individual can be completed only within and through the operation of the redeemed society. And if the Eucharist does carry to a corporate

connotation the facts of Incarnation and Atonement, there is bound to spring from Holy Communion a tremendous social significance. The principle which now comes to light is that the supreme mode of communion with God is possible only as we simultaneously enter into communion with our fellows. Individualism as a complete method of religious life is ruled out; and the application of sacramentalism to the economic sphere cannot be doubted. If religion is the summarizing and determinative expression of the human response to the universe, if it is the ultimate bond of behaviour, it is simply frivolous to suppose that the laws of religion and the facts discovered in religious experience bear no relation to the plane of secular activity. It is much more reasonable to assert that no plane of activity can successfully be treated as secular. And certainly the situation of men, in which they may kneel side by side in equality to receive the Body and Blood of Christ, thus by the exaltation of common things integrating themselves within a supernatural order, and afterwards proceed to the market or factory and fight furiously for daily bread, needs only to be considered in order to be condemned.

Sacramental religion, by its very nature, denies that conflict can be the last relation, in any sphere, between redeemed men, and implies that while the conflict is acquiesced in, their salvation is incomplete. If man cannot perfectly commune with God, except in co-operation with his fellows, it seems to follow that society can never provide an adequate sphere

of ethical life so long as it reduces co-operation to the barest, indispensable minimum, and allows competitive rivalry to remain its dominant characteristic. If the communion of men, set forth by the representative priesthood at the Holy Table, can make of common bread the Lord's Body, it seems that the strife of men must make of bread and gold and flowers something evil and poisonous, in so far as it causes them to minister to perverted ends.

We conclude then that Christian experience contains a revolutionary challenge to very much that is accepted as integral in the order of modern society. It appears to require co-operative service as the fundamental motive in Christian people, and thus to cry aloud for a transition from the system of capitalist industrialism which makes no essential demand either for real co-operation or for genuine service. The challenge of Christian experience requires far more than a sentimental friendship between rich and poor. The assumption that great private wealth and luxury are morally possible for Christian men confronted with conglomerate poverty and squalor, is one which the realization of the Christian facts cannot sanction. The Christian Faith by its very genius calls in question the motive of private gain; and since our society does accept such assumptions and motives, our society must be transmuted. But neither organized force, nor coercive legislation, can ever, from the Christian standpoint, prove a satisfactory means of effecting that transmutation. The only finally effective revolution must be voluntary in the persons whose way of life is to be revolutionized.

What the Christian dogmas, and the life and experience lying behind them, really desiderate, is the consolidation of an universal society quite distinguishable from those States which found upon natural sanctions, and constructed in accordance with the faith that Christ is Lord of all, and His way the only true way of practical life for men. The world departed from this vision with the collapse of the mediæval hope; and now the Christian witness is deeply entangled with a system which contradicts it at every point. From this situation the Christian Society must extricate itself at all costs. To this end it seems that, while the majority of Christian people must wage a long warfare for God's Kingdom, compelled to live within a society whose canons they condemn, the Church must yet seek by force of practical example to show the better way. She must call her less hampered sons and daughters, as to a religious vocation, to some attempt at communal life. She once did this upon a large scale, and the need is now greater than ever. Communal Christianity, in the form of monasticism, once taught the world the dignity of labour. In some parts of the Church, this duty has never been lost sight of, in spite of periods of sloth and worldliness; but it seems to be an obvious duty of the whole Church in face of modern economic strife and Mammon-worship. It would require great courage and involve some risks; yet some such adventure appears to be necessary, if the world is to be effectively reminded of the whole bearing of the Gospel.

It is true that Catholic doctrine refuses to enforce

community of goods; but seeing that the Church canonized Francis, this can only mean that the *coercive* assertion of the communal principle is not regarded as Christian. But if the Church rightly rejects the method of coercion, she is still bound to demand an economic order which shall accept the Lordship of Christ. And what that Lordship signifies, He Himself has indicated:

Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority (play the tyrant) upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

IX

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE CHURCH

The Church, as we saw at an early stage of our discussion, must be regarded as the direct issue of the Incarnation, if we understand that divine irruption into our world as having for its purpose the reconstruction of human fellowship upon a divine pattern. Obviously, since the new fellowship must have its roots in prayer and worship, or suffer the loss of its distinguishing characteristic, the Christian Society must be primarily, and in the special sense, a religious institution. It seems possible, also, to make some definite deductions from these premisses. The Christian fellowship must be a historically continuous society, because it is the product of a historic act of God. Being a society, it can perpetuate itself only as a social corporation : it cannot be conceived as springing up sporadically, without historic cause, here or there ; and in fact it never has done so. Even the sects did not fall from the skies. Nor has the Holy Spirit, whose creative power is much emphasized by those who belittle the importance of historical continuity, ever formed a Church, *de novo*, within heathen or non-Christian societies apart from

witness and work arising from the corporate, historic Church of tradition.

Again, this Christian fellowship, it seems, must be sacramental, seeing that it stands to testify to the marriage of material means with spiritual purpose, and is itself the effect of the Word becoming Flesh. Thus the heart of the Church is quite naturally the great Sacrament of the Eucharist, and those followers of Jesus who fail to understand this, miss His central meaning for human life in this world. It follows that in all its worship the Church will naturally employ visible beauty of sound, colour, form and gesture, as of sacramental significance. In other words, the Catholic tradition expresses the essential religious attitude of the Society of the Incarnation. Such conclusions need cause no hard and bitter judgments upon those forms of Christian organization which stand apart from these deductions, since there have been causes sufficient, in all conscience, to obscure even the broadest realities, and to produce revolt from the most natural and proper religious expression.

There is, however, one deduction of supreme importance, from the conception of the Church as a fellowship founded by one particular, supernatural act within history, and that is that the Church is divinely intended to be a visible unity. This, for long ages, was an assumption so thoroughly accepted, that to question it would have seemed absurd. And, indeed, the notion of a sectarian Christianity is an absurdity to be tolerated only for a time, and because of the sinful waywardness of men. For it is

perfectly clear that the consolidation of society in Christ implies the unity of that society. We saw that one weakness in Plato's ideal construction of society was that he had no conception of universality. His metaphysical notion of the Idea of the Good was narrowed to become the foundation of his sectarian Republic. Now, the Christian Gospel does, indisputably, possess the element and aim of universality; but universality implies unity, since it must be the universality of some one thing. No matter how rich and complex the variety which exists, that very variety can eventually be preserved only by being transcended. And since, if the Church be the Society of the Incarnation, its historical and sacramental nature seems to be essential to it, the unity of men in Christ must be achieved by the universal acceptance of the Catholic institution; though within that unified society there must be much variety, or there will be only barrenness and stagnation.

There arises, however, the supreme question of the relation between this Christian fellowship and the organized life of those societies whose accepted basis is other than the Christian revelation. We have declared throughout our whole argument that the Christian facts and dogmas involve a specific mode of human association, a definite approach to the problems of social order, economic exchange, and the relations of nations and classes. The difficulty now confronts us, of stating what is to be the attitude of the fellowship which accepts Christ as its co-ordinating Bond, to the rest of the world. We have

seen that in the Middle Ages Christian thinkers made the assumption that European society was Christian: the Church, in the specially religious sense, was but the devotional side of the whole body of Christendom. There was, for them, no problem of a Church placed within a secular society hostile or indifferent to its principles. Yet, as a matter of fact, the Church had come to its position from precisely such a situation of trial and conflict, and it had achieved triumph by differentiating itself from surrounding pagan society upon many important issues. Still, we know that the mediæval assumption was too hasty: the body of Christendom never was sufficiently Christian, and this fact meant disaster for the Church itself. Too deeply entangled with contemporary society, too closely identified with its postulates, it lost eventually the control which it had won, and saw secularism advance to the place of power. The result is that in the modern world Christians find themselves more embarrassed than ever. National loyalties, class and group loyalties, claim their allegiance, and often place Christian against Christian in bitter hostility for some political or economic cause; and there is no sufficiently co-ordinated Christian authority to reduce this anarchy to order.

How, then, must the Christian fellowship address itself to its modern surroundings? What must be its practical method? When we consider the contrariety between Christ and the powers of this world, it may appear that the only faithful course would be for the Church to organize its people as an

economic corporation, definitely withdrawing itself from the life and business of the secular States and discarding responsibility for their affairs so long as these were conducted apart from Christian sanctions. But this stringent logic overlooks several important elements in the situation. Certain facts must be appreciated. In the first place we must remember that the apostolic Church at Jerusalem adopted precisely the plan we have stated, *so far as one community, living within another, can do so;* but the plan was abandoned. It is easy to understand that the ardent fellowship of the disciples should have led them to desire a community entirely delivered from worldly entanglements; but unless that community is economically self-contained and self-supporting it cannot find such complete deliverance, and in modern conditions such economic isolation is less possible than ever. It does not appear that our Lord had ever commanded such a method, nor is there any sign that He sought to practise it.

It seems rather that what must happen is the permeation, by Christian influences, of a sufficiently large economic "body natural." This was the method eventually followed by the Church, and in the Middle Ages it was leading to the control of prices, financial operations, conditions of labour, and a hundred other features of social life, in accordance with Christian ideals. We are not required to believe that this social order was perfect, or anywhere near perfection, but only to observe the fact that the control which was being exerted upon it was proceeding upon Christian assumptions. The

Church, moreover, while attempting to mould the whole body of European life into a Christian communion, was constantly illustrating the ideal by other methods, in the great religious brotherhoods which, in their best days, were brotherhoods of prayer, and of toil and service shared for spiritual ends. It certainly seems that by completely severing herself from the world, the Church might gain in distinctness of outline; but, on the other hand, she might become so remote from the sight of men that her outline would never be noticed. The end, of course, is that human society shall become, industrially and economically, the Kingdom of Christ, and the interpretation of the Gospel and the Sacraments in the terms of common life; and it is probable, upon the whole, that the method of gradual permeation is the surer one.

This, however, does not mean that the Church can sit down and accept the world as it exists. Although she had not called her people out of the life of the Roman Empire, and they were mingling with pagans in business and affairs every day, there were some pagan practices which, rather than accept, the Church was ready to die. So also must it be in these days. If the Church were sufficiently cohesive, and sufficiently awake to present issues, to forbid her people to take part in wars involving strife between Christians, or in any war dictated by the policies of secular States for their own ends, she would enormously increase her moral credit in the modern world. And if, beyond absolutely opposing certain worldly practices, she deem it wise to leave her

people within the secular organization of life, she is behaving dishonestly unless she is constantly seeking to destroy the very conceptions upon which that organization rests. Moreover, it is her duty to-day, as ever, to provide scope for the most adventurous experiments in social sacrifice for those of her children who possess vocation.

Perhaps the most revolutionary idea she can preach to-day is that loyalty to Christ and His fellowship is the supreme loyalty, and must take precedence of all the claims of nation or class; and defiance of worldly authority for this end would create for the Church a noble opportunity. It must be made plain that what the Church is seeking is the leadership of the world, and a central place in a civilization which shall draw its guiding forces from her. She once reached such a position, and forfeited it because she was too prone to lead the world by the world's methods. What she must now desire is leadership in love, humility and sacrifice. This cannot be gained by dignified defence of privilege, by overweening care about the social status of her clergy and leading laymen. Dean Inge has observed that the Anglican clergy are being increasingly drawn from the working classes. He sees this, and sorrows because he believes that the working classes, taught to think, are dangerous. He is right. Our Lord and most of His apostles belonged to such classes. A working-class clergy is not incapable of genuine culture and refinement: it is probably more capable of understanding the woes of the multitude than is an aristocratic caste; and if it has been taught to

think according to the mind of Christ, it will be dangerous, not for the Church, but for those interests of snobbery and false superiority which sometimes seek shelter in the Church.

We are, however, faced with the task of evangelizing the masses of men and women in all classes of Western society, as the first step toward the realization of a Church which shall also be a kingdom. We have reached a situation in which preoccupation with the visible and temporal has resulted in such visible and temporal confusion that qualified observers express serious doubt as to whether modern civilization can ever emerge therefrom. In an age when physical science has advanced to unexampled victory over the concealments of nature, there is grave lack of that sovereign wisdom which should employ these discoveries for truly humane ends. We breathe freely only so long as they are not being employed for devilish ends. The failure to conceive any adequate end of existence upon the secular plane has produced a bewildering welter of contradiction upon all sides. The clash of giant forces in the realms of international and industrial relations reverberates unceasingly around the globe, until there is scarcely a thinker of repute but is filled with combined fury and despair at the spectacle of man's life in the modern world. Galsworthy, Wells, Chesterton, Shaw, Dean Inge, have emptied many vials of wrath upon it. In some respects the outcry of protest is more violent than that which rang through Europe, calling for "reformation in head and members," when the Middle Ages had

passed into decay. It may be heard from students in many departments of life. A noteworthy feature of this period is the criticism of our economic system arising, not from class-conscious working-men, but from academic economists; and against these attacks, very little intellectual defence is being made. In other fields—the drama for example—one may read in many journals slashing assaults by critics upon the mentality of this day. In fact, the one problem which our thinkers appear to have set themselves is how to escape from a city of destruction.

It is, therefore, not surprising to find people of diverse outlook declaring that the first need of the modern world is "a revival of religion"; but it is important to know exactly what that phrase is supposed to mean. Stereotyped repetition of a verbal formula may possibly do as much harm as good; and the assumption that a religious revival must be precisely the same thing in every age, with the same emphasis and the same psychological concomitants, will bring us only to more complete failure. The problem is how to persuade men to accept Christ as the inspiring Law of their personal and social life. That purpose remains the same from generation to generation; but the methods of its achievement must vary with the whole social, economic, intellectual and psychological movements of human history. The emphasis which procured amazing results in eighteenth-century England is now almost incapable of producing any response worth speaking of. Indeed, it is almost impossible,

for men who are at once informed and honest, to make that emphasis. The silent pressure of generations of changing thought, changing social and economic order, is upon us, however unconsciously.

Some see this, and immediately suggest watering down those Christian dogmas which seem out of harmony with contemporary notions; but, as we have seen, the great dogmas of the Trinity, the Incarnation and the Atonement are the very things the world now needs to consider. A Gospel which has no challenge, no revolution in it: a Gospel which constantly allows itself to be challenged and revolutionized by the suggestions of the secular crowd, is useless. Whatever men may think about it, they need to be told that they are sinners outraging a divine purpose: they need to believe in the Atonement wrought by God Incarnate: they need penitence and faith; but it is the bearing of these facts upon the modern situation which has to be considered. Unfortunately, while in some quarters it is being pretended that this situation is the same as that of the eighteenth century, others admit the actual changes, but attempt to trim the Gospel in order to meet them. The real task is to admit the changed situation, but to study how to bring to bear upon it the changeless truth of God in Christ.

It is very significant that the only great and really productive revival of religion in English Protestantism took place in the eighteenth century. It was, indeed, largely a protest against the effects of two centuries of Protestantism. It really did effect a profoundly modifying influence upon English charac-

ter; but its time and place are important because they undoubtedly moulded the very shape of that revival. The Wesleyan movement cannot possibly be understood, apart from an understanding of the social and intellectual conditions of England at that period.

The intellectual position, so far as it concerned religion, was, of course, dominated by the effects of the Renaissance, and by an overweening belief in the power of the human mind to explain everything in heaven and on earth. The age called itself the Age of Reason. Its attempt at reconstruction in religious philosophy took the form of Deism, a view of God and the universe shaped by thinkers like Shaftesbury and Bolingbroke, which confined revelation to the fact of the created world and the normal exercise of human reason upon it, and left the Deity comfortably remote from the affairs of men. The Deists were mighty fine fellows, quite convinced that they had plucked the final fruits of philosophy. They did not foresee that within two centuries they would appear insignificant and hopelessly outmoded; but in their own day they created an atmosphere breathed by most minds, and their influence must be taken into account in any estimate of the evangelical work of John Wesley, for they served, unconsciously, to create the psychological environment in which that work became possible.

Another factor in this process was the development of economic theory. Adam Smith systematized and interpreted much that was implicit in the mind of his period and had for years been taking shape;

and behind Adam Smith, as behind Shaftesbury in the previous generation and behind Jeremy Bentham a little later, there were two main preconceptions. The first was that of the entire propriety of the individual's pursuit of his own interest. The second was that this self-interest, consistently exercised, would produce social harmony. As we have already seen, there were elements in this philosophy which were not entirely ignoble, because the individualists were concerned to remove all kinds of illogical privileges and limitations upon a man's power of self-expression; but something was then coming to birth in England which was to change the face of the world and bring to light a whole series of new and perplexing problems which they had never foreseen. Premonitory signs of the Industrial Revolution were appearing. The new gospel of the right of every man to do the best for himself, assuming as an axiom that the removal of artificial limitations would provide equality of opportunity for all, overlooked the ethical question which arises from the native inequalities of men. The new industrial movement gave scope to the philosophy of Individualism. The individual had his rights as against the old privileges and limitations; but he had no equivalent rights against the superior strength or cunning of another individual, and by the end of the eighteenth century disastrous consequences had followed.

We are now in a position to understand what there was, in the contemporary conditions, to make possible the Evangelical Revival. Deism had withdrawn

God from everyday life. Individualism had withdrawn the State and the powers of the aristocracy from everyday life. Under the old Tory and Royalist theory, however shamefully it was parodied in practice, no man was entirely responsible for himself. There was a social system which was supposed to take note of him. The county families and the squires might neglect their duty, but the duty nevertheless was theirs, to know the people whom a wise Providence had placed under their protection. The Individualists objected, not without justice, to that system, with its petty tyrannies; but while their claim for equal freedom was well enough for those endowed with great energy and keen minds, it left the masses no better off. They fell into a new bondage, the bondage of industrialism, unhampered by factory laws or any industrial legislation at all. A sense of kinship departed from the crowds. The God of the Deists did not know them, and the squire was no longer responsible for them.

It is therefore not surprising that the crowds of common people flocked to hear the Methodist preachers, who proclaimed the importance of the most insignificant and obscure person in the highest court of the universe. They now learned that God was still interested in them, and that even their sins had terrific import. The Methodists did not really challenge the main philosophy of Individualism, at least directly; but they promised assurance and reassurance to the individual who was being knocked out in the battle of life. The whole situation of the

time, intellectual, economic, psychological, lent force to the message. The soul was shown its relation with God, and poor, ignorant men were given to believe that, after all, they were not simply waste and lumber, or beasts of burden, but that they, also, had a high choice to make and a profoundly significant destiny to decide. The importance of this message is permanent and must never be minimized; but its reiteration, with the same psychological address and the same emphasis in face of a situation utterly changed, does but render it unintelligible to men.

Undoubtedly Methodism assured men of the dignity and importance of their own personality—but this is not the particular stress needed to-day, because the average modern man is quite ready to assume the importance of his personality. Let him occupy never so lowly a place in the social order, he has little doubt that he is as valuable as anyone else. He has organized great Trades Unions and has sent members to Parliament in order to affirm this very thing. The "proletariat" is now deeply self-conscious and bent upon asserting itself; and it comes into sharp collision with the system which has grown up during the past two centuries. This conflict is deeply engaged with the question of rights. The main preoccupation of our generation is the harmonizing of fiercely asserted and clashing claims; and our chief problem becomes nothing less than how to preserve society from being riven asunder. It is upon this question that the Church of Christ

must speak, before there can be any sort of revival which shall be truly formative and not merely sentimental. The problem is not now to deliver men from an "inferiority complex." Very few have such a thing. The task is to harmonize personal value with social good, and this is fundamentally a problem for religion: it can find its solution only within a society which carries the relations of men into transcendent issues.

We have to remember, also, that the cold Deism, which provided such an excellent background for the hot-gospelling of the Methodists, is dead. Wesley largely helped to kill it. The modern mind is more ready to accept a vague doctrine of Immanence, practically the opposite of Deism. But whereas the latter had helped men to think of a transcendent God, so that the preaching of Christ crucified was able to bring them to a sense of having outraged and rebelled against God, and thus to penitence and to the consciousness of a new start, the influence of Immanence tends to make the sense of sin against God much more dim. Many novelists, dramatists, minor poets and journalists have been talking about the life-force, urging men to live out their possibilities, teaching them their right to what is called a "fuller life," and this again enforces the general assertion of "rights." The modern man can hardly believe himself a miserable sinner. He is either an employer, very angry about the sins of the workers; or he is a worker, very angry about the sins of the employers. He is not disposed to practise self-accusa-

tion. He is prepared to accuse only those forces and obstacles which obstruct him in the pursuit of what he regards as his own rights. And so the confusion grows. The mad oppositions continue. The world is sick and awaits deliverance; but the very nature of its sickness defines the shape which the Christian message must take to-day.

The first requirement is that there shall be an emphatic assertion of fundamental Christian dogma as of the most potent social reference. There is, after all, no final reason for recommending the teaching of Jesus unless one is prepared to go to the stake for the proposition that Jesus is God Incarnate; because, if He were not, there is no guarantee that His message does not now require searching revision. Moreover, the Cross cannot be proclaimed as the energizing source of the new social motive, unless the Cross be held to have involved God. And, again, if the reconciliation of personality and society be the problem, it is hopeless unless such desired communion be already given in the nature of Ultimate Reality, and God Himself is both personal and social. At all events, vague rhetoric about the "attractiveness" of Jesus, or the beauty of His words, is not going to do very much. It will provide no sure, objective standards. And thus, to speak of a revival of religion without a revival of the Faith, is of no avail.

Secondly, there is required a resurgence of the whole Christian ethic, and we must largely supplement those parts of it which we practise only

because they concern our purely private affairs. The Gospel lays down a method of approach to life which is quite antithetical to the existing methods of the world. We have gathered from it that life is to be based upon service, and not upon gain: that emphasis is to be laid not upon rights but upon responsibilities: that the goal of activity is communion within a corporate society of goodwill, based upon the Eternal Reality of which Christ is the revelation. The assertion of these propositions must necessarily challenge the political and economic procedure of our day. Are those who claim to be Christians prepared to follow the implications of the Faith? Are they prepared to recognize that repentance and conversion involve the acceptance of such standards, and that the Christian revolution in a soul directly involves the Christian revolution in society? The supposition that a religious revival will preserve the modern situation and prevent drastic changes is a confession of complete misunderstanding of the gigantic and gloriously terrible figure of Jesus. Religious revival must address itself to sweeping away the whole tangle of our social problems; for it must set men and women to the work of replacing society upon supernatural foundations.

This is only to say that religious revival must produce finer and fuller Church-consciousness. Whatever may be said of the appearance of the Church to-day, she is the only society which attempts to relate human action to the facts of

Incarnation and Atonement; but she must seek a far more complete embodiment of her own principles. She must insist that her Gospel and her Sacraments are not intended as means for the cultivation of mere religiosity, but do in fact imply definite modes of government, trade and work. The Church can never rightly be an insulated circle, occupied with prayer and worship alone. The acceptance of Christ as utterly trustworthy means the erection of the entire social structure upon Him. Such an attitude gives due heed to the Evangelical, Sacramental and Ethical sides of religion, and allows each to fortify the others; and such a shape must Christian propaganda take in these days. The popular entertainment type of "revivalistic mission" run by some advertised person much photographed and paragraphed, which never comes within reach of realities, is worse than a waste of time. The Society of Christ has to evangelize this age whereof the chief perplexity is to discover how to hold men in confraternity and bind the nations and classes in indissoluble unity. Therefore the Church and the Sacrament must become the leading ideas of the religious revival so urgently needed: and the Church must appear, not as the buttress of respectability, but as the City of Brotherhood and Beauty.

Our argument is that the very existence of the Church, the society of men formed by the impact of the supernatural at a definite point in history, and sustained by divine communion, necessitates

the idea of a civilization of which that Christian fellowship shall be the inner core and animating principle. But since the Christian revelation is the solution of the problem of human association, it must follow that Christendom is bound to seek for itself universality: that it is to affect not only some parts of the world intensively, but the whole world both intensively and extensively. The external unification of the world in our own times, by rapid transit and a world-market, does nothing of itself to procure spiritual cohesion, and may possibly produce universal confusion. It is therefore impossible to dream of a Christendom entrenched behind some geographical boundaries, holding the rest of mankind at a distance. Indeed, the Church, at most periods of its history, has deliberately contradicted such a conception by encouraging foreign missions. At the present time this must be one of the chief interests of Christian men, if they perceive the actual situation of the Church in the world. The Faith implies the solidarity of the race and the wholeness of human life; and the immediate future will require the emphatic assertion of this truth.

Critics of foreign missions continue to produce arguments which, attaining currency for a time, all alike pass out of fashion. At the moment it is said that the operation of the "herd instinct" is sufficient to account for all the romantic adventures of missionaries at the ends of the earth, since it is only natural that the most ardent Christians should wish to achieve triumph for their own

religious herd, and equally natural that the Church should encourage the work of depleting and weakening the rival herds. But we may point out that propagandist activity does not always characterize religion, or even religious zeal. There have been religious communities which have had no desire to win the world, but have supposed their chief duty to consist in keeping themselves apart from the world. There are, moreover, considerable differences to be observed between the missionary endeavour of Christianity and those of certain other great missionary religions. The missions of Mohammedanism have been notably connected with racial pride and military conquest. The missions of Buddhism have been practically ineffective beyond the limits of certain racial and mental types. But neither of these considerations can justly be applied to Christianity.

Certainly its original propagation had nothing to do with racial vanity or with military conquest. Its first preachers were mostly Jews, persecuted and ostracized by their own countrymen because the Gospel declared that the Jews had disgraced themselves by murdering their own Messiah; and the early Church, a very cosmopolitan association, found itself face to face with the pride and power of the Empire against which it was physically defenceless. On the other hand, the Christian religion has never been confined to few races or types. The Gospel was early carried to the heterogeneous assemblage of peoples which composed the Empire. It won the barbarians who flooded

in later. It has been planted, not without success, in every continent. It is sometimes said that, being a Western religion, it must always remain unfitted for Eastern peoples; but it is overlooked that it was originally an Eastern religion. Nor can it be said with certainty that any people is impervious to Christian teaching. If in some instances, such as that of the Turk, missionary propaganda seems to meet with nothing but stony indifference or strong opposition, the reasons may lie in history and its resultant psychological situations, and the passage of time may yet weaken them.

The real explanation of the fact that after two thousand years of varying success, after many mistakes and disasters, the Church still claims the whole world as its field, is that missionary endeavour is more native to its genius than to that of any non-Christian religion. There is no intrinsic reason why the one movement having its source in Mohammed should spread over the whole world, because there is, in the nature of things, no reason for declaring that Mohammedanism is a final religion. Mohammed was a prophet claiming to supersede all who had gone before; but his assertion cannot prove, nor is his message of such a nature as to convince, that other prophets elsewhere might not receive a similar revelation, or even a surpassing one. There is likewise no reason why Buddhism should, as a historical movement, depend upon missionary labours to convert the world. A man found a way to peace. There

is no ground for supposing that others, elsewhere, may not find a similar way for themselves—though, indeed, much of the sense of peace and relief brought by Gotama cannot be even understood apart from a knowledge of the moral and psychological effects of the religion which Buddhism has in part supplanted.

In contradistinction to these, Christianity is missionary because it relates to one historical solution of an universal problem. It declares that God did something for men, at a certain time, in a certain place ; and that this cannot be repeated. It assumes that the New Testament is the record of God's answer to that confusion and distortion of the soul which has everywhere produced social disruption—the situation of which Greek thought became cognizant, without being able to touch the enigma in practice. The principal reason of the failure of the Greeks was that they never rightly diagnosed the malady. The true diagnosis was given by the Hebrew prophets. They saw the malady and called it sin ; but not only did they enormously advance the definition of sin : they spent themselves in practical efforts to overcome it. It is remarkable that the nation which produced them called down upon itself their most weighty censure ; but it was here, in this conflict of prophetic consciousness with the sins of Israel and Judah, that the main line of preparation for God's great act was being developed. At length, in the fulness of time, the supernatural love appeared, the Word was made flesh and dwelt

among us. The Christian Faith thus finds itself inseparably connected with particular historical events; but it holds that those events are of perennial and universal significance. Consequently, the Church, the new human cohesion, which is the effect of that supernatural impact, cannot rest while any portion of mankind is beyond the pale of her communion.

The modern situation demands unswerving faithfulness to the missionary cause. The superficial judgment which was accustomed to insist upon the impossibility of East and West ever being drawn together by one common bond, is faced with the hard and dangerous fact that, at least, the East is very capable of copying our sins and mistakes, so that unless it is saved by what is noblest in the West, it will be ruined by what is basest. It is questionable whether the Asiatic religions can permanently stand up against the pressure of our materialism and positivism, and unless Asia is rapidly Christianized it may be rapidly turned into something like hell. Commercialism and militarism may domicile themselves there more thoroughly than they have done, even in Europe; and if China were to wake up and declare for "world-power or downfall," she might cause the downfall of many things as well as her own. So, also, the lofty superiority which could speak of "lesser breeds without the law" has now to consider that the lesser breeds, coming into the economic market, can cause a great deal of difficulty for the lords of the earth. In fact, the whole

process of economic interrelation is making a new ethical interrelation absolutely necessary. And there is no ethic capable of universal application but that which springs from the Manger and the Cross.

This does not mean that the Christian world-vision is one of dull and rigid uniformity. It contains room for varieties of cultural expression of the single Faith, and can behold a Church which is "national" in the sense of expressing the genius of a people in the service of Christ and the world. The Christian vision sees racial differences brought to the enrichment of the complex unity of life. It sees the diverse gifts of the earth's peoples brought in contribution to the welfare of the whole family of mankind, the strength of the strong gladly lent to the support of the weak, the light of the cultured gladly passed to those who sit in dark places. The writer was once wrathfully accosted in a northern city, in which the local university was appealing for funds, by a prosperous gentleman who desired to know why he should contribute to a seat of learning which was educating Chinamen and "niggers." There is really only one answer—he ought to do so because the Lord Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the world. The understanding of Christian dogma makes partial loyalties and stinted gifts impossible with a clear conscience.

The vital need of this day is that Christian men shall understand the world-constructive implications of their Faith, and shall see that their religion

is not a mild sedative for frayed nerves, or a palliative of their mortal fears, and nothing more, but that it is a terrific energy and a shining star. The Gospel is in the world to renew and reform and control the world: to produce a society in which strength and skill shall become the instruments of love and not the servants of selfishness: to bind men with one indissoluble bond of loyalty: to produce beauty which shall banish ugliness and to awaken praise which shall silence the noises of war. The Gospel is here to evoke upon the chaos and squalor of this earth the radiant glory of that great city, the New Jerusalem, the Lamb's Wife, whereof the inhabitants do serve God day and night in His temple, and the sound of their joy is like the sound of many waters.

The modern age passes before our eyes, and soon will be gathered with those times which are past and strange. Men who have lived during this age have often supposed that all future days would but continue the work it had begun, admiring its wisdom and adoring its gods. It now becomes certain that if this is to be the future course, the lot of mankind will be mean and miserable. We have ventured, once or twice in the progress of our discussion, to dissent from views expressed by Mr Belloc; but his main thesis is profoundly right—Europe must return to the Faith, or perish. But we may add that, since an isolated Europe is impossible, and the Faith teaches the solidarity of the human race, the only hope of man is the construction of a world-order upon the Supernatural

Reality revealed by Christ. Peace belongs only to fellowship in Him; and the greatest promise in our sky is that His Church, the Church of Gospel and Sacrament, may yet become the home of humanity.

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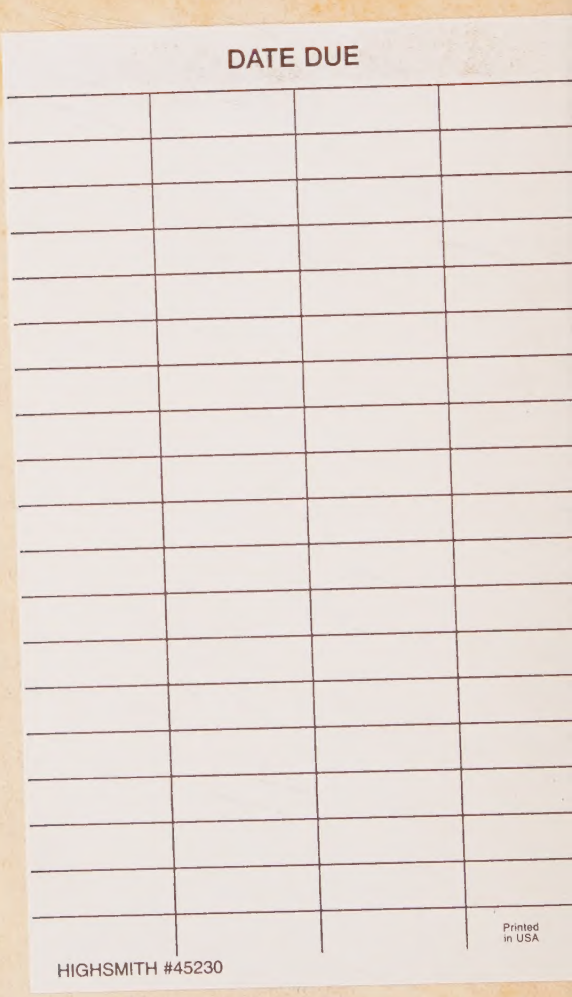

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